

PUNCH SPRING NUMBER

March 13 1940



HOME THOUGHTS FROM ABROAD



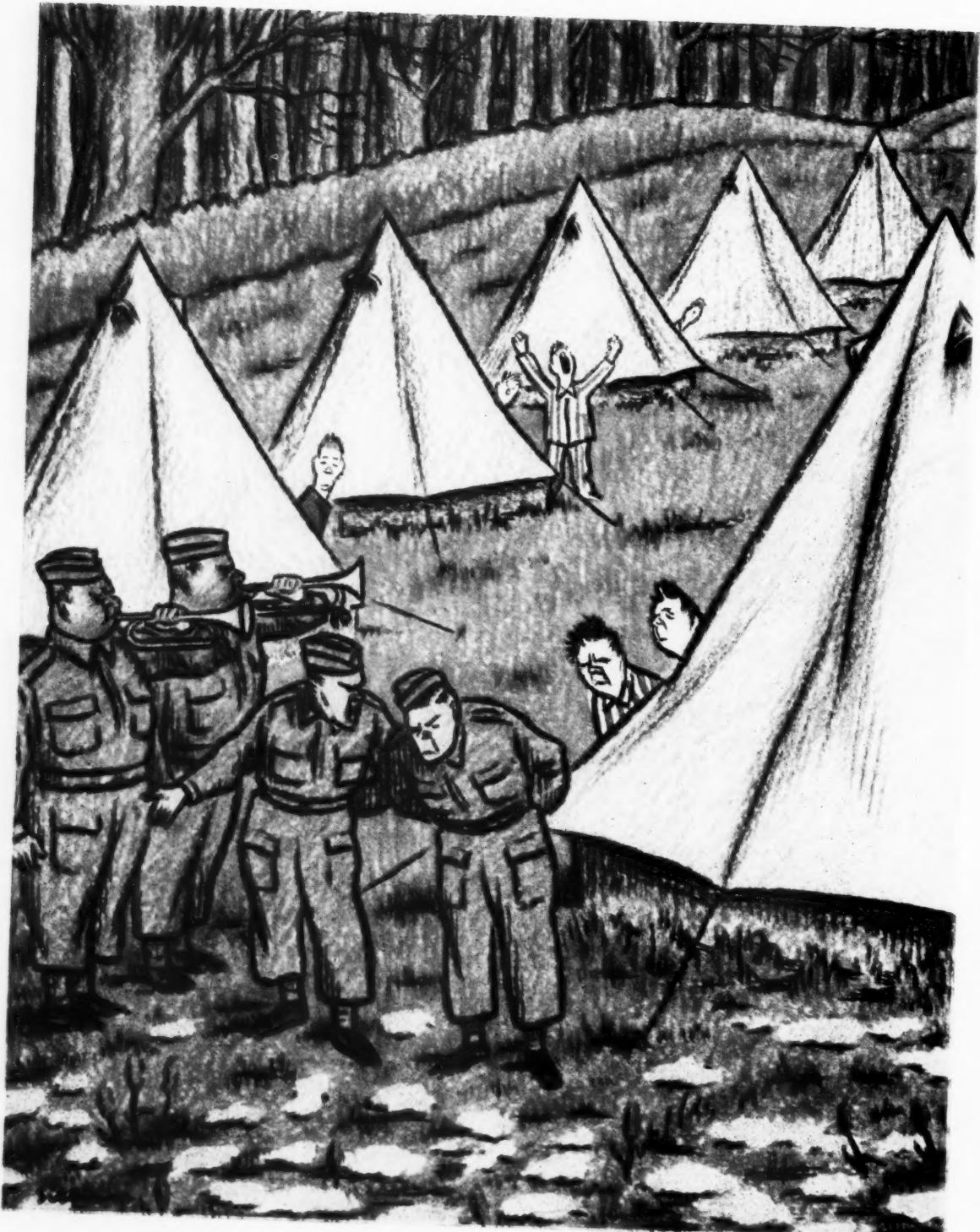
THE FARMER'S IDEA OF THE LANDGIRL



THE LANDGIRL'S IDEA OF THE FARMER

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"I said 'Nature's waking up.' "

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Charivaria

SPRING is here again. But, oh, how we miss the early crisis!

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"HITLER still doesn't know which way to turn," writes a correspondent. Opinion in neutral countries seems to be that he won't try rightabout because it sends him bang through Russia.

○ ○

Safety Belt

"Thus the note does not reject outright the Pan-American plan. It emphasises that the British Government, 'who themselves so long strove to prevent war, fully appreciate the desire of the American Republics to keep away from the shores of the American Continent.'"—*American Paper*.

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"What should HITLER give up during Lent?" asks a writer. Just up.

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Schoolboys are encouraged to start savings clubs. Many have already written home for something to save.

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An American newspaper says that the FUEHRER wears a lock of hair across his forehead to hide a scar resulting from a knock on the head he received in a riot. That explains everything!

○ ○

The present heavyweight boxing champion of the world has an interest in a fruit-preserving factory and his hobby is collecting eighteenth-century French furniture. Which-ever way you look at it, LOUIS Quinze.

○ ○

Dealing with his reported movements, a Stockholm correspondent thinks that Herr von RIBBENTROP must be twins. He must be. One man couldn't make all those mistakes.

○ ○

An author says that his wife is the severest critic of his novels. This is just wishful thinking.

○ ○

A scientist tells us that we moderns are inferior to prehistoric man. Speaking for ourselves, we would rather be inferior than prehistoric.

A naturalist reminds us that the majority of wild geese that come to this country at breeding-time emigrate from Germany. We must go along to the Serpentine and watch them scuttling themselves.

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A Nazi propagandist has said that Herr HITLER would prefer to land in London on a Saturday. That of course would depend on whether the Arsenal was at home or away that day.

○ ○

It is announced that included in the cargo of a German ship captured by the French was a consignment of parrots for the Hamburg Zoo. Not for the Hamburg radio station?

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"The FUEHRER concentrates on important papers immediately after breakfast," says a neutral journalist. Rotterdam cross-words?

○ ○

A Nazi spokesman explained to the Austrian people that any British leaflets found in Vienna are blown from the French frontier by westerly gales. There is even more wind up in Germany than we thought.



○ ○

"DOCTORS BUSY.—Local doctors are having a busy time. In addition to numerous cases of influenza, quite a number of people have contracted German measles, seconded by Mr. E. Norman Jones."—*Welsh Paper*.

He needn't bother.

○ ○

"The Nazi propaganda-machine is designed to inculcate doubts and fears in the minds of those who listen, or who can be persuaded to listen, at all seriously," says a speaker.

But their first aim of course must always be to win over those who laugh too loud to hear what is being said.

○ ○

Mr. LLOYD GEORGE's grievance seems to be that the Government is moving heaven but not earth.

○ ○

"The old-fashioned bathing-machine, drawn into the sea by a horse, was very safe," says a writer. It wouldn't be nowadays, without an anti-aircraft gun on the roof.





"And there's another thing I should never have known if I didn't listen-in to Hamburg: we're terribly short of food!"

American Slang

A Glossary for Elder Readers

If you are one of those who tagged along recently for our visit to an American hotel in search of hotel slang, you will recall that we had managed to get into an hotel and take a room. As was said then, our problem this time is to get out again without marching up to the front desk and insisting on paying our bill. No use in making a scene over it. Better just to slip away quietly. In other words, it is our intent to

Blow the joint. To leave, esp. (and in this case abs. and pos.) without paying. *Syn.*: to lam, to take a powder. (You will notice that in the synonym corner we find two old friends—or, as the purists would put it, two old enemies.) If we blow the joint and

get away with it we shall then linger none too fondly in the memory of the hotel staff as being

Beats. Guests who depart unobtrusively without paying their bills. *Syn.*: skips. A skip takes a powder in an effort to

Make the joint. Bilk the hotel; defraud Mine Host. If, after having run up a small bill at an hotel, a beat successfully lams, he may then remark, "I made the joint for a few lousy bucks" (he would put in the adjective "lousy" to show his contempt for the amount of money involved, an amount which, once he is safely away, he regrets is not a good deal more impressive). This expression, "to make the joint," has another meaning: it may be

used to mean "to go to jail"—a "coincidence" which should give the would-be beat pause for thought. Let it not be supposed that the average hotel's hired minions are sitting idly by taking no precautions against beats and grifters (small-time crooks). If they have reason to suspect that a certain guest is wrong (not to be trusted) they are quick to

Drop the boom. Refuse him any further credit. This may put him

Up against the gun. In difficulties. A sharp eye will be kept on him lest he try to sneak out with his luggage. If he is in a third-class hotel and leaves his room during the day a bell-boy may even come up to his room and

Give it a fast frisk. Examine it in

his absence. Furthermore, he may return to find himself locked out of his room, even though he has his room-key with him. The management accomplishes this by the use of a

Plug. A special key of Machiavellian nature which locks the door in such a fashion that the regular screw (key) no longer suffices. Not even a top-screw (pass key) will serve to open the portal once the management has had at it with a plug. This gives the delinquent guest the unappetizing choice of either abandoning his imprisoned luggage or

Bouncing. Paying his bill. "To bounce" also means to ask for payment. Hence in this case you might say that the hotel has bounced the guest and there is little for him to do but bounce. If he decides to bounce he steps up to the desk and is given the

Beef. Bill. A "beef" also means a complaint, and in this sense can be used either as noun or verb. Example of conjugation:

I beef;
You beef;
He, she, or it beefs;
We beef;
You beef;
I never heard so many complaints!

This makes the term a very fitting one to apply to an hotel bill, since many people no more than get their beef than they begin to beef. But to return to our guest who is up against the gun: if he is a paperhanger (passer of worthless cheques) he may try to

Kite paper. Pass a bad cheque. If he is the type who is clever with his hands and makes a hobby of printing and engraving, he may try to bounce the beef with

Queer. Counterfeit money. Passing queer is a risky business but a profitable one. Some of the men who manufacture their own version of what banknotes should be are simply in the profession for what they can get out of it, while others, less crass, are unorthodox economists who just don't believe in government monopolies of any sort. But be that as it may (and it may, for all I know), passing queer is a dangerous way to bounce our beef, so we'd better think up something else. Perhaps, just to encourage constructive thinking, we should have the room clerk send up a

Crock. A bottle of liquor; also, a person addicted to the same. A crock, in other words, is one who hits the crock until he is

Rumdumb. Inebriated. *Syn.*: wino. Rumdumb may also be used as a noun

to signify one who wanders around a greater part of the time in an alcoholic haze. Imagine! Drunk all the time. A sad picture. Really, after having a case like that called to my attention I don't believe I want to drink just now, after all. Furthermore, our chances of sneaking out without laying a little something on the line are beginning to look slimmer and slimmer to me now that the time has come. So instead of trying to be clever and resourceful, let's just pool our resources and get out of here.

More Secret Weapons

"PLANES THAT EAT THE NAZIS"
Heading in *Manchester Paper*.

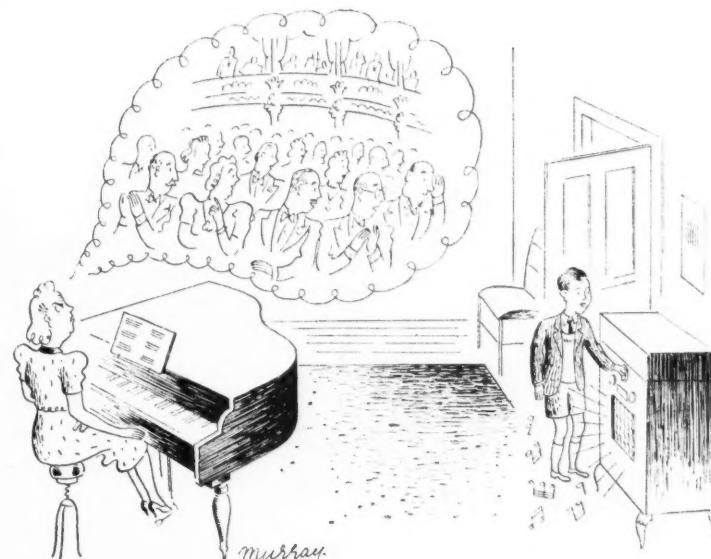
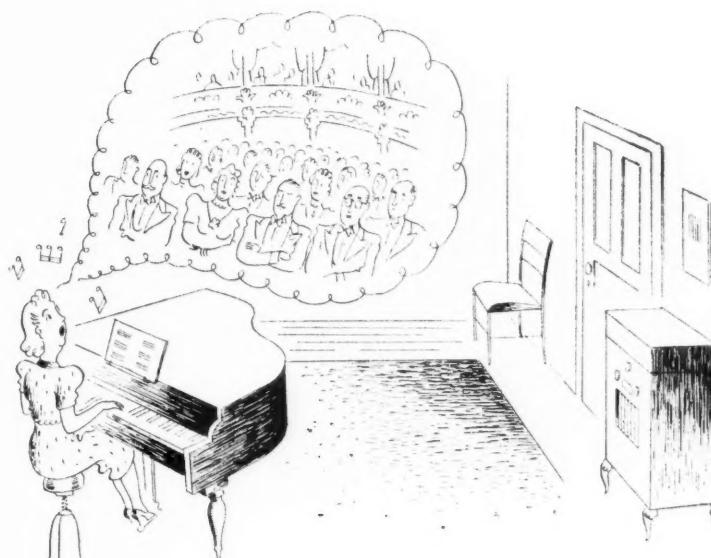
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"The adoption of isolated anti-aircraft detachments is spreading.

Here is a case. One woman in Kent is supplying 20 hot baths a week, with tea thrown in, to a certain detachment."

Evening Paper.

It must run away with the sugar.



Hymn of Hate

"I wish ole 'Itler 'ad a touch of flu"—Overheard from small grey man looking like a Sub-Inspector of Water-mains.

"When the English begin to hate!"—Kipling or somebody.]

GRRR! Hitler! Yes, a touch of the flu: There's nothing too bad for the likes of you. Just wait and see to what lengths I'll go When my monkey's up and my blood's aglow, Hitler!

May you have a corn on your little toe, Or a chilblain perhaps, or in your eye A rather, though not too, painful sty, Or else again may you martyred be By a moderate touch of housemaid's knee, Hitler!

Our hate's ablaze, you monstrous Hun, May your shoelaces keep on coming undone, And furthermore (for your name is Mud) May you search each morn for your collar-stud, And find the cuffs of your shirts are frayed, And you've only an old blunt razor-blade, Hitler!

May you get when next you add to *Mein Kampf* A shade, just a shade, of writer's crampf, And if that won't make you come to our terms May you fall to German measles germs, Hitler!

And if even then you won't toe the line, I hope you'll get, you horrible swine, A temperature of ninety-nine,

Hitler!

J. C. S.

○ ○

Scene in a Café

Mysel. A is for Archie and *Altmark* and And B is for Blitzkrieg and Beating the Band C is for Churchill and Coupons for Cars D is for—

Man with Red Moustache (whose tea I had been drinking by mistake). What is all this abominable rubbish?

Mysel. It is a kind of alphabet thing which I am writing, or rather perfecting. I have it in my head and I am going through it again to see if it needs polishing up here and there. You see, each line contains nouns beginning with the appropriate letter, that is, the letter following the letter used in the line before, if you see what I mean. Thus D is for Dachshund and—

Moustache. Yes, yes, but what is it all in aid of? What is the purpose of it?

Mysel. I don't know. Children like these things in peace-time, when A tends to stand for Apple, and M may be either Monkey or Mother or, in exceptional circumstances, Marrowfat; in war-time, for some reason, adults take them up. The rule is that they must refer to war-time topics and ought to be insulting to the enemy. Thus I might have written:

A is the Archie we're waiting to pop off
B is the Bolshie—

No, that's a bit difficult; it's the Bolshie who ought to

end in popoff, and then where's your rhyme? I shall have to say

A is the Attitude Adolf Adopts
B is—

Moustache (leaning forward earnestly with his elbow in the buttered toast). What about Z, eh? And X? Have you thought about that?

Mysel. Ah! You have caught the fever. People always get excited about X and Z; it helps to sustain their interest through the duller parts of the alphabet. That, and the satisfaction of finding they've guessed right about some of the easier letters. For instance, H is for Hitler—

Moustache. I'd guessed that.

Mysel. Exactly. You are the ideal pupil.

H is for Hitler and Himmler—

Moustache. And Hess?

Mysel (peev'd). —and Hess,

I is the Insults they put in the Press.

Moustache. You're wrong there. It's Goebbels who puts the insults in the Press. Only I suppose you've used him up for "G."

Mysel. Kindly take your sleeve out of my jam. Thank you. I have plenty of Gs. I have Goering and Gauleiter and *Graf Spee* and Gas and *Gneisenau* and *Grüblschicker*.

Moustache. You mean Schicklgrüber.

Mysel. You have no right to tell me what I mean. The whole business is very complex and confusing. Now for X I have:

X is the number, at present unknown,

Of Yen that the Chang-Kai-Shek government own.

I've worked in Y as well there, you see. It's ingenious.

Moustache. I don't like it. I am not interested in the number of yen that the Chang-Kai-Shek government own. Very few people are, I should imagine, outside the Chang-Kai-Shek government, and you're not writing this in Chinese. If you were, you'd have to start with Z and work backwards.

Mysel. You're thinking of Japan.

Moustache (unintelligibly). I am thinking of éclairs. The point is, I'd as soon hear about the number of fish in Peru as about the number of yen in China—even if they used yen in China, which I very much doubt. You're thinking of Japan. Now for X and Y I suggest:

X marks the spot where the murder was done

Y is the Yallop we'll give to the Hun.

Mysel. What is a Yallop?

Moustache. It's like a wallop, only with a lot of check-side on it. Compare the difference between blip and clip.

Mysel (coldly). I expect you would like to hear what I have thought of for Z. In the last war it was Zeppelin, naturally, but time doesn't stand still, you know. So I've had to think of something else.

Moustache. There's Zoroastrianism of course.

Mysel. No, you'll never guess it. Listen to this

Z is a frightfully secret affair;

I can't tell you what or how many or where.

Moustache (making a gesture of dismissal with his left hand). Weak . . .

Mysel. Oblige me by taking your finger out of the butter, wringing some of my tea out of your tie, and taking yourself off.

Moustache (rising and taking itself off).

A's the Amount that I owe for my tea,

B is the Blighter who'll pay it for me.

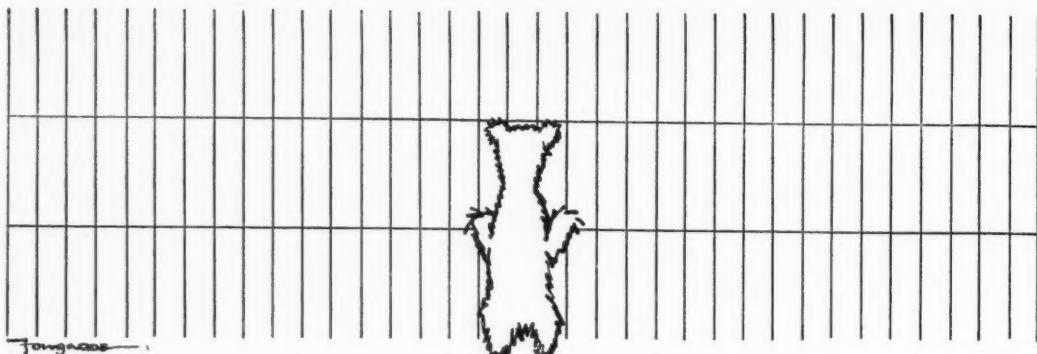
H. F. E.

Barrage Balloons Beware!

"NAZIS LAY MINES BY THE MOON"—"Daily Mail" headline.



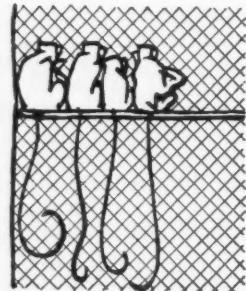
NEW MAPPE OF OLDE PARKE



The Zoo

NOTHING very astounding has happened at the Zoo since war started. As far as the animals are concerned, life is just the same, except that some of their keepers have gone away and there are fewer of the interesting children and other people that they always watched and sometimes made friends with. What has really happened is that the people's animal zoo is still here, but that a lot of the animals' people zoo has been evacuated to the country. In September and October of last year only about a tenth of the normal public went to see the animals; the fraction has now crept up to a third, which is a lot better but which still is not doing the Zoological Society very much good.

The trouble (for the Zoo) is that it costs nobody anything save those who pay at the gate or who become Fellows. That is, it does not get any public funds—or much money from anywhere else, for that matter. In peace-time it was doing very nicely—building new elephant-houses and making plans for new rodent-houses and things like that, and getting on with its zoology and just about making both ends meet on the gate receipts and Fellows' subscriptions.



When the war came very little had to be done to the collection. A.R.P. took up a lot of time and trouble at first, until it ran smoothly, and the contents of the Aquarium and all the poisonous animals had to be destroyed or put where they could not do any harm.

So there is still as much to see as ever among the mammals and birds, which, after all, occupy thirty houses out of the thirty-three. And in consequence the food problem is still very much the same.

Rationing is all very well. Not many of the animals use foods that have had to be rationed for human consumption, and for those that do proper arrangements have been made. But the difficulty in putting

a rationing scheme into operation in the Zoo is the fact that such a scheme has been working there for years already. Each animal is on a balanced diet calculated to suit its requirements, and the meals have been worked out so carefully that it is practically impossible to change them without false economy.

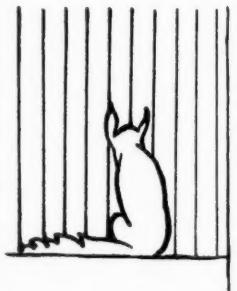
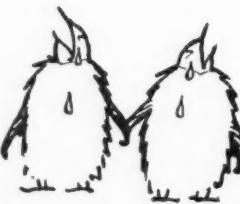
In a few cases *ersatz* foods have been devised. To the pelicans meat soaked in cod-liver oil seems to be as acceptable as

fish. But these cases are an insignificant part of the whole.

Some system of economy has had to be arranged, however. At the present rate the Zoo will receive in 1940 £50,000 (or more) less than it did in 1939—a sum which is getting on for half its normal income. It was the Fellows who hit upon an idea that has been an enormous help in solving this problem. They invented the adoption scheme. The idea is that friends of the Zoo should select special favourites among the animals and agree to maintain them for the duration of the war. This does not mean, of course, that adopters are allowed to take away their animals (or, in Government parlance, evacuate their adoptees). The animals stay in their cages, the adopters pay for their keep, and tasteful little labels are put up saying "Adopted for the duration of the war by Mrs. John Smith," or by Colonel Blimp, A. Fellow, or whoever it may be.

Prices (per week) are arranged to suit all pockets. Seafions are the most expensive, because they eat so much fish.

They cost thirty shillings a week to adopt—more than elephants, which only cost a pound. At the other end of the scale any poor animal-lover can, for a shilling a week, support a humming-bird, a stoat, a squirrel (small), a coypua, a porcupine or a marmot. For two shillings or half-a-crown a week the Zoo can do you a nice line in douroucoulis, squirrels



(large)
mandibular
or sloth
pygmy
(small)
panzer
antelope
giraffe

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(large), genets, coatis, capybaras, mangabeys, capuchins, mandrills, anoas, birds of paradise, kookaburras, flamingoes or sloths. For seven-and-six you can adopt a tapir, a pygmy hippopotamus, a lammergeyer or a chimpanzee (small); for fifteen shillings a lion, a tiger, or a chimpanzee (large). Penguins and wart-hogs cost five shillings, antelopes and small cats four shillings, giant pandas and giraffes ten shillings.

Already nearly two hundred animals have been adopted, from echidnas to mice, and from gorillas to rat-tailed opossums. Some of the Fellows have got wonderful mixed bags. One has adopted the Okapi, a tame Puma called Bill, the Harpy Eagle and the Monkey-eating Eagle; another has chosen two Humboldt's Woolly Monkeys and two Hyenas; a third a Nagor Antelope and a Dwarf Sulphur-crested Cockatoo.

A colonel who belongs to the Naval and Military Club has adopted a Ratel and a Richardson's Souslik; a family

in Surrey a Panda and a Sea-lion; a Mrs. Baker has taken a Pileated Gibbon, and a Mr. Baker a Senegal Striped Weasel. Since, at the moment, there is no Man in the Zoo, the Caracals have been adopted by two ladies—both keen visitors to the Small Cats' House.

Even the Dominions have rallied to the help of the Zoo. Some weeks ago the newspapers ran a story about one of the aardvaarks, complaining that nobody seemed to want to adopt this obscure and curious beast. Among the numerous offers that were immediately made was one from an aardvaark fan in Pietermaritzburg. Unfortunately the aardvaark had already been adopted by the time the offer came through, but he is quite happy with a brindled gnu.

There are still a lot of animals without adopters (even gorillas), and anybody who feels like keeping an exotic pet, if only by proxy, can write to the Superintendent at the Zoo, N.W.8, who will send all particulars. J.F.



Dug-Out

HAVE you heard old Stiffy's back at the School House?"
"Wha-at! Not *Stiffy*!"
"Yes, by gad—and the same old lad
With the same old dopey sort of look he had—
You know—slightly squiffy;
Same old bunny-face, same old goat,
Same old trousers and the same old coat
And the old pipe just as niffy."

* * * * *
He thought he'd done with blackboard chalk
And class-rooms with their smell of soap
And books and ink and that queer dope
They do the desks with. All that talk

Of voice and number, tense and mood,
Of rhymes and rules that grammars give
For gerund and for genitive—
He thought he'd done with these for good.

Retired. He'd said the School good-bye;
Sometimes on Speech Days 'mid the crowd
He'd come and clap—but not too loud—
And then, unrecognised, he'd hie

Home to his lone suburban keep;
Tea and the wireless news at six;
A visit to the local flicks;
An hour of chess; the crossword; sleep.

He'd earned it surely? Forty years
He'd hammered into schoolboy skulls

The lore that repetition dulls
To lunacy. With blood and tears

He'd earned his evening . . . But the Head
Wrote, "We're short-handed. Could you come?"
And the old warrior heard the drum
And groaning raised him from the dead.

So there he is in School once more—
Rusty a little, something slow
(And sometimes calling Smithson Snow—
Who left in 1934),

A little prone to wistfulness,
A little terrified in truth
Of merciless and mordant youth,
Cursing himself for saying "Yes."

Yet satisfied that in his way
He's up and fighting with the rest . . .
Aye, *dulce et decorum est*
To—rise again *pro patria*!

* * * * *
"Who's the old guy who's taking us in Latin?"
(And the back rows scrape and jostle.)

"Some old dud who was born before the Flood."
(And the ink-pots clatter and the desk-lids thud.)

"Gosh! What a rum old fossil!"

But—what cares Stiffy for all these things?
He's back in harness and his heart has wings
And his old flag's flying and his spirit sings
As in Springtime sings the throstle! H. B.

Investigations of Hector Tumbler

At the Café Peste

NOT a hundred miles from Piccadilly Circus there is a certain street. It is one of those corners of old London where something of the quaintness of the past still lingers in our humdrum age. In this street there are two long rows of shops and houses. They have wooden doors, windows of glass and roofs of slate. Up and down the street, intent on their various errands, human beings—some men, some women, some children—may be seen walking. And at the corner of the street is a little café known only to the few, where, if you are privileged, you may be served—by a head-waiter on nodding terms with crowned heads—with the finest hard-boiled eggs in Europe.

It was Hector Tumbler, the famous detective, who first introduced me to the Café Peste. Though he was no *bon viveur*, and indeed often told me that he never noticed what he ate or drank at all, yet his palate was almost, if not quite, legendary. He could distinguish, with his eyes wide open, between rye whisky and Australian burgundy. Once, for a bet, he distinguished between twelve double-gins, a bottle of vodka and six apricot brandies, and had he not been restrained he would have distinguished between three bottles of champagne and a cateful of stout as well. No wonder that Contrafagotto, the aged head-waiter, always greeted him with extreme deference.

It was worth visiting the Café Peste merely to meet Contrafagotto. He was over a hundred years old, and although totally deaf, refused to retire. He often said to me in his excitable Italian way: "Yes, signor, I am rather attached to the Café Peste." Some years ago, while he was serving buttered toast to the King of Moldavia, his legs had suddenly given way beneath him. Henceforth he could be seen gliding about the room in an electric bath-chair.

"Really, Contrafagotto, I must congratulate you on this bread-and-butter," said Tumbler one evening in a rare burst of enthusiasm, after finishing his eighth hard-boiled egg.

The head-waiter paused at our table with a gratified smile. "I trust the salt is to your liking, Signor Tumbler?" he said. He broke off for a moment to nod to a couple of crowned heads.

"Admirable," said Tumbler. But at that moment the doors of the café were suddenly flung open and about thirty men, muffled up in cloaks and with black felt hats pulled down over their eyes, entered. Casting threatening glances about them they put several tables together and sat down without a word. Contrafagotto had turned pale. Putting his bath-chair in motion, he approached them. The leader, who stood head and shoulders above the rest and wore a much larger hat, waved him roughly away. Packages were produced, and in a moment the tables were littered with ham-sandwiches and jam-tarts.

Tumbler's eyebrows rose. He scribbled something on a piece of bread-and-butter, folded it, and pushed it across to me. I read the single word "Botulismo." I was not surprised. I had already recognised the master criminal in the leader of the gang.

"What devil's work is afoot now?" muttered Tumbler to himself. I had noticed before that he always spoke in this way when Botulismo was in question. But there was no time for such reflections now. Alarmed by the irruption, the diners were already leaving the café. Within ten minutes Tumbler and I and the thirty criminals had the place to ourselves. The head-waiter wrung his hands.

"Signor Tumbler," he said in a quavering voice, "I implore you to get rid of these men for me."

"I'll do what I can," said the great detective, "and if I can do more, I will."

The criminals had finished their tarts and sandwiches, and now they sat staring across at our table in silence, obviously waiting for us to go. We stared back.

"So we meet again," ventured Tumbler at last.

"I doubt it," said Botulismo, looking the detective up and down with a sneer. There was a roar of laughter. A lesser man than Tumbler might have been disconcerted. But Tumbler merely rose to his feet and left the café without once looking behind him. I followed. As I passed the bandits' table one of them attempted unsuccessfully to strike a match on the back of my neck.

The first round in this battle of wits had gone to us. Yet in spite of this, Tumbler was not discouraged. And it must be admitted that if Botulismo's crimes were invariably pointless, meaningless and motiveless, nobody perhaps was better fitted to deal with such crimes than Tumbler himself. Furthermore, he had a sincere regard for Contrafagotto, and the old man's distress wrung his heart. And naturally enough it irked him to find his favourite café turned into a thieves' kitchen at a moment's notice without rhyme or reason. There are ways and ways of doing such things.

We were early at the Café Peste next evening, but Botulismo was there before us. And so, night after night, there continued a veritable war of attrition. But it was only too obvious that the criminals intended to commit no crime for which they could possibly be brought to book. Botulismo knew his law. Night after night they put all the tables together and shared out the day's loot—jewellery, bank-notes, haberdashery, plum-cake, antique furniture, and sacks of potatoes—then caroused until the small hours on weak tea laced with raw alcohol. Night after night they made the neighbourhood hideous with oaths and drunken singing. They beat the chef to death, and shot the wine-waiters one after the other. Dazed and helpless, we looked on from a corner, while Contrafagotto wept openly. There was nothing we could do, and Botulismo knew it.

But with infinite patience Tumbler waited for the inevitable slip which would send the master criminal and his associates to the gallows. At last it came. One evening, while Botulismo was confiding to his henchmen the details of a plan to steal Westminster Abbey and pawn it on the Continent, Tumbler suddenly gave a low chuckle of triumph.

"Ring up the Yard!" he said. "We've got them now."

He pointed with a shaking finger to one of the desperadoes. I gasped with astonishment. *The wretch was stirring his coffee with a fish-knife!*

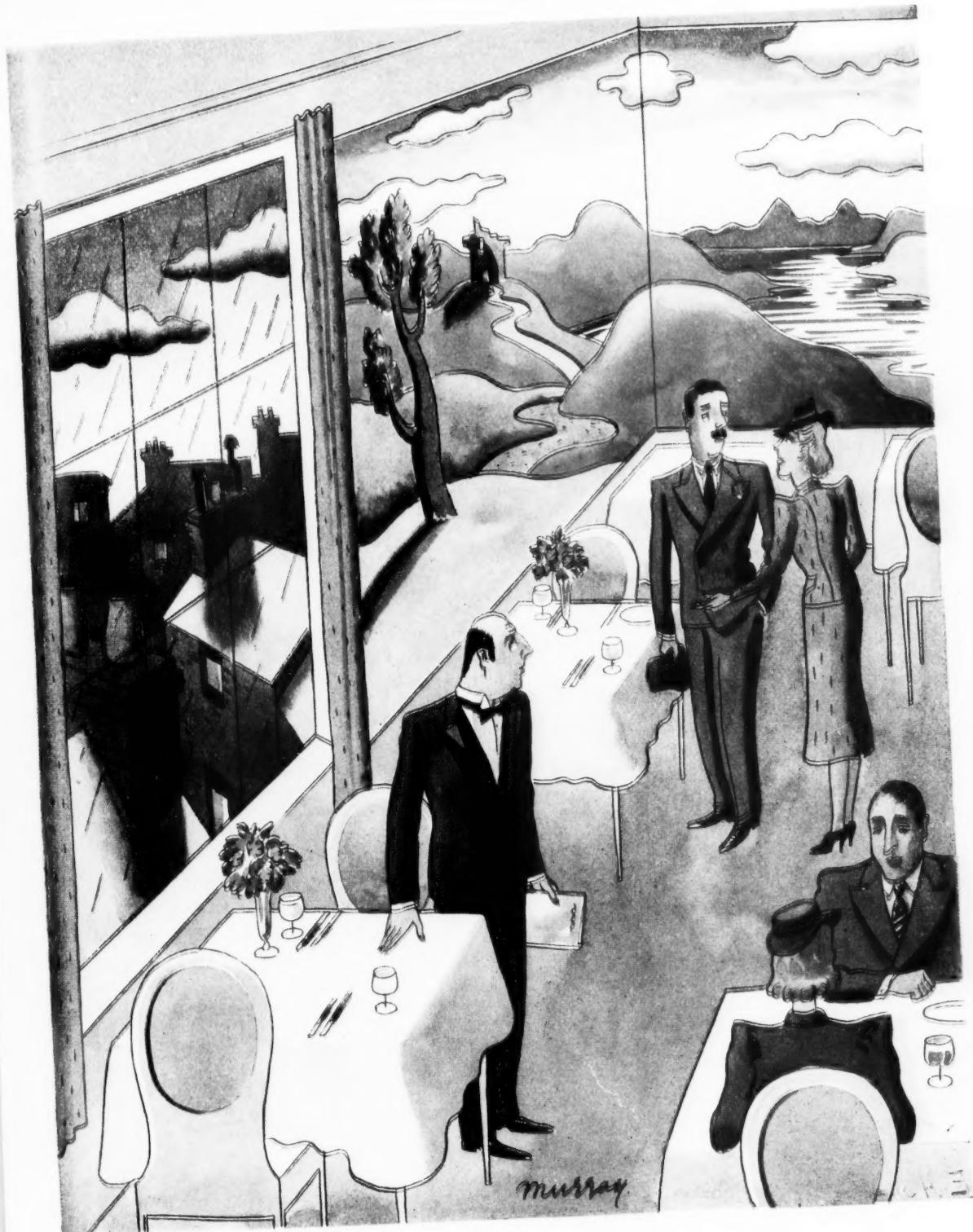
A few minutes later a strong force of police arrived. The gang was too stupefied to make any resistance. Only Botulismo himself attempted to bluster.

"It's all some preposterous misunderstanding, officer," he said, trying to slip a halfpenny into Inspector Mandrake's hand. Next moment, snap! the handcuffs were about his neck and he was led away.

After making our statements at Scotland Yard we returned to the café, where Tumbler indicated his intention of distinguishing (for a bet) between a dozen bottles of Napoleon brandy and the same number of Imperial Tokay. But an unpleasant surprise awaited us. Contrafagotto had committed suicide. In our absence every table in the café had been occupied by the East Lumpshire Haulage Workers' Glee Club on their annual outing.

PUNCH SPRING NUMBER

March 13 1940



"Let's have a table in the sun."





. . . RECONNAISSANCE



"Tell me—do you ever sense a queer change in yourself at the vernal equinox?"



"As there is a short interval before we can announce the arrival of the 5.42, here is a recording of 'Scatterbrain.'"

At the Pictures

THE NINETIES, THE EIGHTIES, THE TWENTIES

THE ideal film detective story these days seems to be one most of which you can laugh at; and Hollywood's affection for *Sherlock Holmes* is perhaps explained by the fact that his adventures can be filmed in such a way that there isn't a moment of them that you have to take seriously. At least that is the way in which Hollywood always films them. In the new *Sherlock Holmes* (Director: ALFRED WERKER) it is *Dr. Watson* of course, as ever, who is the acknowledged buffoon; but one might be excused for concluding that the whole thing was a sort of game. Except for a moment or two here and there of conscientious efforts to chill the spine (the sinister South American who plays the alleged "Inca funeral dirge," the pursuit in the dark, the club-foot-prints) it is all foolery, in the incessant and all-pervading fog that Hollywood believes to be an attribute of London. This fog, by the way, is only visual; it comes all by itself, unaccompanied by cold, rain or anything else; it doesn't make even the ground damp. *Watson* can happily lie down in the gutter—I forgot why—and get up again without so much as a speck of dust on him anywhere. Ah, yes, and there is a garden-party, at which a music-hall performer in a straw hat and striped blazer, who sings, "I Do Like to be Beside the Seaside," is revealed to be none other than the versatile *Mr. Holmes* himself. . . .

The main story is all about how *Professor Moriarty*, the Master Criminal (who is acquitted in the first scene a second before *Holmes* bursts in with our old friend "fresh evidence"), provides *Holmes* with a murder mystery to keep him happy while he, *Moriarty*, steals the Crown Jewels from the Tower. The climax is that classical Fight on the Height—but the Height from which *Moriarty* is thrown to his doom is the top of the Tower battlements.

In this piece there is hardly any deduction: *Holmes* is almost as mutton-headed as *Watson*; he has to go to the South Kensington Museum to find out what an albatross is like, and it is the lady in distress who has to remind him of its connection with *The Ancient Mariner*.

The principals are the same as for *The Hound of the Baskervilles*: BASIL RATHBONE and NIGEL BRUCE. The lady in distress is IDA LUPINO. *Moriarty* is GEORGE ZUCCO. Forget all about what you think of as the real *Holmes* and *Watson* and you may find the thing a not unenjoyable piece of nonsense.

tation. He has to stare, as I say, with glittering eyes, and he has to yell from time to time; not much more. The fable concentrates largely—too largely—on the old stern-father, impetuous-son routine. Father is a General (RALPH MORGAN), son is a Lieutenant (WILLIAM HENRY), who have been sent to smash *Geronimo*. PRESTON FOSTER is a tough kindly Captain. You can work it all out from that. . . . The most enjoyable character is the scout, *Sneezie*, played by ANDY DEVINE. The spectacular scenes are pretty well done.

Already the twenties of this century are a legendary period, but *The Roaring Twenties* (Director: RAOUL WALSH) makes it clear that they roared a good deal more in the U.S. than they did here. Of course we knew that before; and that sums up the chief defect of the picture—so much of it is familiar gangster stuff. But it isn't familiar with JAMES CAGNEY in it. Nobody can touch him in this sort of thing, and though there are old conventions in the story, *The Roaring Twenties* is absorbing and thrilling, with many good cracks in the dialogue.

The story is founded on fact. The part taken by GLADYS GEORGE has been widely identified as TEXAS GUINAN, and I understand that

the CAGNEY part and several others also are more or less authentic. This perhaps will interest people who knew the originals, but over here the names meant little and we can take them all as fiction-characters. It makes no difference. Of its kind the picture is very good. HUMPHREY BOGART is also there, as the pitiless second-in-command; FRANK McHUGH, excellent as usual in the part he is condemned by nature to get nearly always (Hero's Friend, Comic); and PRISCILLA LANE is the girl. The whole thing is very good entertainment, and Mr. CAGNEY makes it something more. R. M.



Sherlock Holmes

CLEANING UP THE NAUGHTY NINETIES

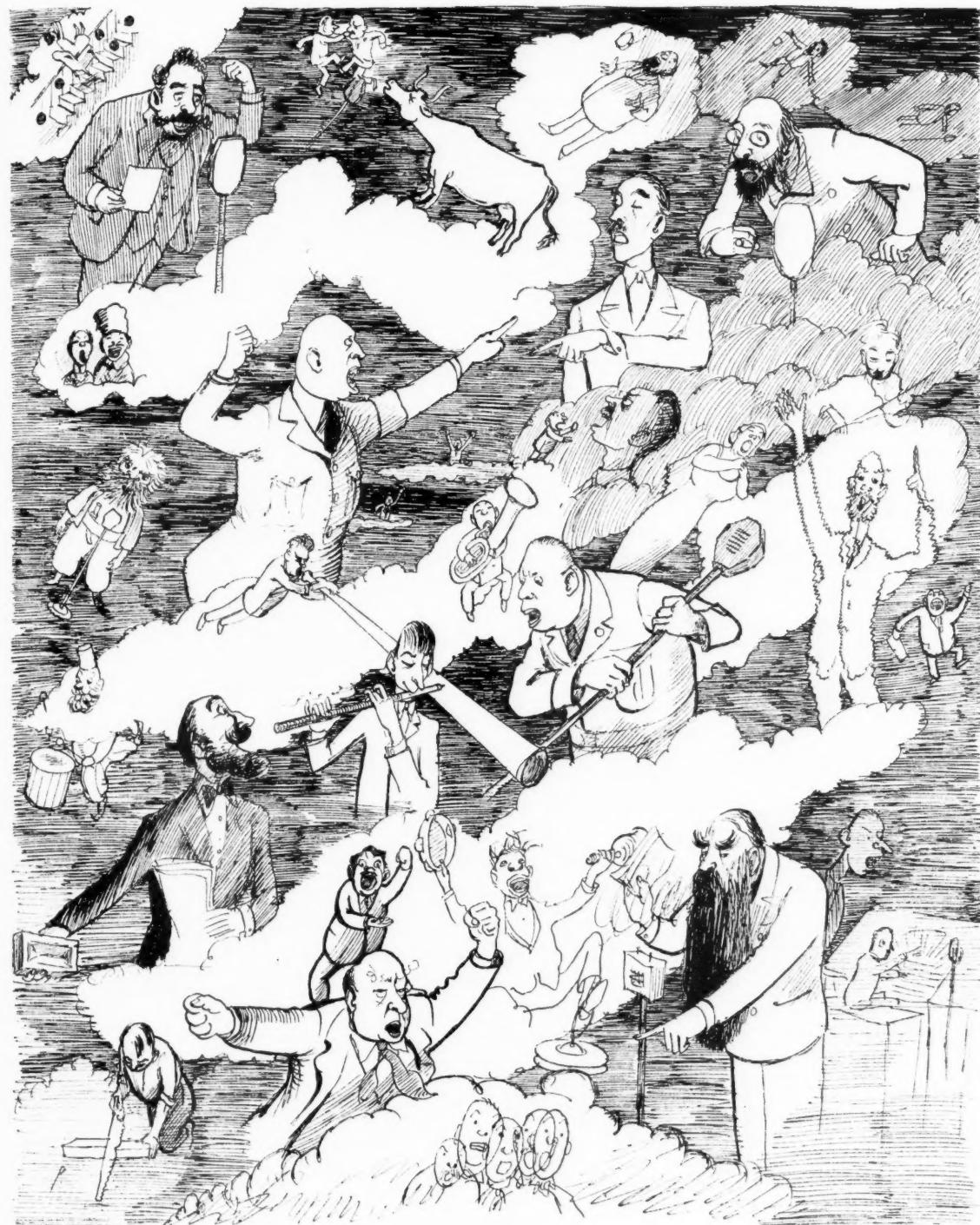
Dr. Watson . NIGEL BRUCE *Sherlock Holmes* . BASIL RATHBONE

I knew *Geronimo* (Director: PAUL H. SLOANE) was simple Indian-fighting stuff, but my hopes that it might prove to be in the same street, as well as up the same street, as *Stagecoach* were disappointed. It was in *Stagecoach* that many of us first heard of GERONIMO, the Apache chief who gave so much trouble round about 1880; but he didn't appear in that picture, so far as I remember, except momentarily in a transparent state as an item in the *montage*, for "atmosphere." He appears similarly quite a lot here, staring at us with glittering eyes through scenes of miscellaneous carnage and extracts from newspapers; but he also takes an active part in the story and is played, I notice, by Chief THUNDER CLOUD.

Certainly his part in the story demands no great subtlety of interpre-

"LESS HOT WATER FOR FLAT TENANTS"
Heading in *Daily Paper*.

Naturally. They don't need so much.



Lines composed after listening to Europe broadcasting.



"Just a minute while I load it for you."

Forgotten Journey

[Peter Fleming is best known for his crossing the Alps with his elephant.]—From a Library Catalogue.]

BEST known, alas! to only a limited circle. I never found time to write a book about this journey, and the series of twenty-four articles describing it, which were to have appeared in *The Times* under the allusive title *Les Malheurs de Sophie*, has been indefinitely suspended owing to the war. I propose, therefore, to give a condensed account of certain aspects of the expedition in this exclusive article.

All mileages are given, for purposes of convenience, in miles.

* * * * *

The whole thing began at the Athenaeum.

I hardly ever use the Athenaeum. It gets me down. The bishops' gaiters convey, like tamarisk roots, an atmosphere of desiccation. The savants, chuntering into their white beards, recall how camels founded in the snow. Besides, I am not a member.

Nor was the elephant. (Her name in the stud book is Moral Rearmament II, but to me she was always Sophie.) We found ourselves both lunching with the same host. He is a distinguished but an absent-minded man, and he had brought us together to discuss measures which might be taken, through the M.C.C., to combat the spread of baseball in Peru. Whether in inviting us he had remembered that Sophie was an elephant or even that I came of a rowing family I do not know. He had the cause of cricket at heart, but what (if anything) he had in his head none can say.

Still, the luncheon passed off agreeably, though several of the less short-sighted members showed a tendency to quiz Sophie in what can only be described as a marked manner. As a whole, however, the Athenaeum took its first elephant very well. Among those who, for one reason or another, were in a position to trust the evidence of their eyes the majority were quick to assume that Sophie was a member of the Secret Service just off on an assignment and properly anxious to test the efficacy of his or her disguise before starting. The elephant, for her part, displayed a perfect equanimity.

* * * * *

It was as we left that I asked her, in the casual way one does ask these things, whether she had ever crossed the Alps.

She replied that she couldn't remember.

She couldn't remember! That simple answer, trumpeted coolly across the *maquis* of St. James's Park, confirmed my first impressions. Sophie was an elephant in a million. We arranged to meet on Tuesday's boat-train.

* * * * *

Travel in those pre-war days was easy. Our journey to the Alps was relatively uneventful. Sophie had much the worst of it. It seems that elephants rarely or never travel on express passenger trains, and it was only by hiring a native of Calais to paint "BRITISH COUNCIL" in four languages on her heaving flanks that I secured for her the necessary priority. Officials, when told that Sophie represented Empire Solidarity and was returning the visit to London of a group of Yugoslavian ichthyologists, gave way for the most part with a good grace. It was surprising how well-versed everyone seemed to be in the technique, if not always in the ideals, of our peace-time propaganda. As one station-master put it: "First you send a young novelist to lecture. Then you send an admiral or a general. Then you send a noblewoman. And now—an elephant!" He then kissed his fingers, in the way they have.

* * * * *

From below the Alps look quite small. From above, they look even smaller. They are, in fact—if you treat them right—one of the more negligible mountain systems. Vested interests—the postcard industry, the Alpenstock magnates, the dim men who keep on scrambling up and down them in the holidays—have built up a glacial and intimidating legend of the Alps. Sophie and I found it possible to take them in our stride.

We were, I fear, ridiculously under-equipped. We had elected—partly because we felt that it would be expected of us—to undertake the crossing of the Alps on a Sunday, which is notoriously the worst time of year. We were unarmed, save for a converted flute; and even this poor tube could hardly be regarded as a weapon of defence (far less of precision) since there was no means of discovering what it had been converted into. We were relatively well off for maps—we had an expensive Swiss stamp, which showed a section of the Alps in profile, and a plan of the site of the National Theatre in Kensington, and an Italian railway guide, featuring the Leaning Tower of Pisa. As for provisions, we took only a bottle of Worcester Sauce (by permission of Miss Italia Conti) and a pair of wire-cutters for use against the frozen vegetation on which it seemed reasonable to suppose that Sophie would have to subsist.

We might, I suppose, have burdened ourselves with a whole lot of suitable equipment and suitable supplies. But every traveller knows that it is necessary to tempt



"You'll have to take him—our coupons are inside."

providence before you can seduce a publisher, and I thought it prudent to run true to form.

* * * * *

The journey ran true to form too. It was inexpressibly uneventful. I will not bore you with the story of how Sophie—characteristically choosing a moment when I was not looking—diverted the notorious Schickgrüber glacier into (as far as I can remember) the Adriatic. It would weary you if I described how we lived for three weeks on St. Bernard dogs fried in their own brandy. And I am far too modest to tell you about the right and left at ptarmigan which I got with my converted flute.

We can therefore skip the details of this futile, improbable but diverting journey and bustle on to the customary finale.

* * * * *

Snow-blind, frost-bitten, the icicles clanking from our jowls (for we were hungry and could not help but slaver), Sophie and I lunched into the Palace Hotel.

Once inside, we thawed with a deafening clatter. The guests looked up from their knitting and their crossword puzzles and made a sound of disdain and incomprehension. "We've done it!" I said to Sophie, on a transient note of triumph.

The sagacious and indomitable creature heaved a sigh which emptied every ash-tray within gunshot.

"It wasn't bad fun," I went on. "I shan't forget it in a hurry."

"I shall," said Sophie. "I've got a rotten memory."

She was, as I have made clear above, an elephant in a million.

* * * * *

(Read also: *Pachyderm Over the Peaks: Some Memories of a Great Trek*. By MORAL REARMAMENT II. SHERRY AND BRIBES, 21/6).

Third Division (North Sea Section)

(The trawler *Leeds United* is in the Navy now.—*Press Item*)

OH, the Navy List's a-glitter with the names of fighting ships,
As eager for their hunting as are greyhounds in the slips:

There's the *Fury* and the *Warspite*, the *Falcon* and the *Bear*.
The saucy *Arethusa* and the fighting *Téméraire*,
For it's always been the Navy's way to name their ships with zest

Since Drake sent in his fire-hulks to smoke a hornet's nest.
But—what about the trawler *Leeds United*?

As dreadful as the hand of Jove that grasps the thunderbolt
Is the mighty battle cruiser; the destroyer's like a colt,
Lean, raking, grey and eager, with a bow that's razor-keen:
These are the Hunters of the Sea, the Grand Fleet's battle-screen,

But—what about the trawler *Leeds United*?

The trawler ain't no lady, nor she doesn't claim to be:
Her beam is broad and generous as she wallows, helm a-lee.
She's much too low amidships, and her bows are short and blunt;

In the company of destroyers she's a cart-horse with the Hunt.

But the able-bodied seaman, who used to pay his bob,
Says: "Wot-oh, *Leeds United*! Ah, I wouldn't 'ave yer job!
We do not mind a battleship, a U-boat's meat to us,
But sweepin' up them bloomin' mines is blinkin' dangerous!

Keep clear! An' good luck to yer, *Leeds United*!"

R. C. S.

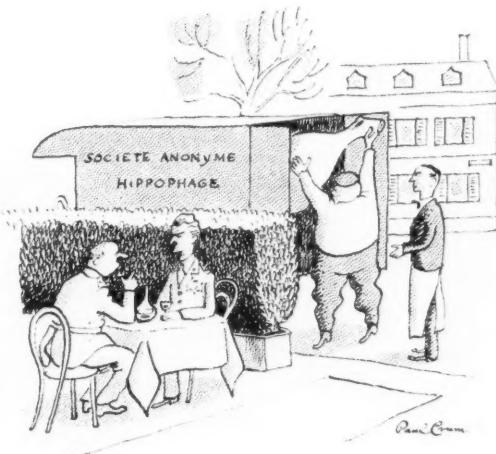
Commercial Candour

"Bargain, £5 19s. 6d., — Battery all wave 183; very little use, like new."—*West-Country Paper*.

○ ○

"If you're shy of finding yourself standing on your head in the early morning . . ."—*Daily Mail*.

Just make up your mind to look the other way.



"One misses a lot not understanding the lingo."

Grimm People

SOME still think that German brutality, dishonesty and greed are new things, brought in by the Nazis, and not to be reckoned in any account against the German people. A flood of light has recently been thrown upon this theory by Professor Haddock's scientific examination of *Grimm's Fairy Tales*.

The Professor's conclusions, issued to-day by the Ministry of Information as a counterblast to the German psychological analysis of *Robinson Crusoe*, are too long to record in full. But a few extracts will serve to indicate the gravity of his discoveries:—

A cursory glance at the illustrations in this book, on which, it must be remembered, the mind of every German child has been fed for generations, will suffice to explain much that has puzzled and distressed the friends of Germany. Here are but a few of the captions:

“Whoever looked at him ran away” (frontispiece).

“Faithful John shot the horse dead.”

“Half a man's body came down the chimney.”

“They met with a man standing on one leg, with the other leg lying by his side.”

“A toad jumped out of her mouth at each word.”

“The end of the dwarf's beard was fixed in a split of the tree.”

“The dragon carried them through the air.”

“They pulled him down on the ground and tormented him.”

“They threw her out of the window into the river which ran past.”

“The toad sprang upon his head and would not go away.”

“She is on a rock in the midst of the sea, watched by the dragon.”

Some of these pictures are charged with terror and disgust; all exhibit with delight the use of brutality or baneful force.

It may be urged that it is unfair to charge the tales or their authors with the extravagance of the artist. Then let us look at the tales. Consider, for example,

LITTLE REDCAP

(better known to us as “Little Red Riding Hood”)

Story. Wolf by duplicity extracts from innocent child information concerning grandmother. Wolf, without warning, devours defenceless grand-

mother. Wolf, purporting to be grandmother, menaces innocent child. Wolf devours innocent child. Huntsman slays defenceless wolf.

Treatment and tone. Emphasis throughout is on power of ruthless and undisciplined force. Scenes of terror (e.g., veiled threats of disguised wolf to innocent child) described with evident and inhuman relish.

“Even the destruction of the Wolf,” says the Professor, “is so handled as to convey no moral lesson whatever. The Huntsman does the deed, it is clear, without being aware of the Wolf's recent activities and with a delight in killing not easily to be distinguished from the Wolf's. No child could draw anything from this tale except a taste for horror and the conviction that might must always prevail.

“Consider, by way of contrast,” he continues, “what one of our gentle English writers would have made of the same unpromising material. The English child's indestructible love for animals; the Christian belief that there may be good in the worst of us; modern doctrines of penology, recognising that delinquency is more often a matter for the psychologist or the doctor than the judge—all these might have found expression. One can imagine the good Huntsman overcoming the Wolf, unarmed, by sheer force of character, the savage Wolf respectful and repentant, and ending his days in virtuous expiation as a domestic pet. One can imagine a hundred touches which would have given warmth and a kindly colour to the final scenes. But the German character prefers a tale of naked and unrelieved brutality.”

Cinderella is another tale which the Professor subjects to a merciless scrutiny. “Here,” he says, “the main thread is one of almost sadistic cruelty—and I use the word in its true sense. . . . (Note, by the way, how often in these tales the tormenting of a young woman is the theme.) *Cinderella* (a beautiful girl, we are told) is not merely subjected to slights and insults: the ill-treatment is *physical*. At night—every night, it seems—she is denied the use of a bed, and compelled to sit, or even lie (see pages 88 and 91) in the ashes. . . . Her tormentors had a favourite sport, which was to throw peas and beans into the ashes and compel the girl to pick them out again; and this infliction is repeated with an unhealthy delight, as dis-

creditable to the author as to *Cinderella's* family. . . .”

In the later stages of the story there are details even more revolting to a sensitive mind. When the elder sister finds that the silver slipper is too small for her, her mother reaches for a knife and says, “Cut off your toe. . . .” “The maiden cut it off, and squeezed her foot into the shoe. . . .” Later, “the Prince . . . saw the blood flowing: so he turned his horse back, and took the false bride home again.” The same horrid scene is repeated when the younger sister “cuts a piece off her heel.” In neither case does the Prince show the smallest human sympathy with the foolish girl's sufferings: nor does he attempt in any way to relieve them. . . .

In the famous *Hansel and Gretel* two young children are twice left by their parents to perish in a wood. Escaping that fate, they enter the house of a witch who attempts to roast the young girl in an oven but is herself thrust into the oven and roasted alive, which draws no expression of horror from the children, or the author.

In *The Handless Maiden*, a father is compelled by the Evil One to cut off both the hands of his daughter. In *The Three Little Men in the Wood* dwarfs cause a toad to jump out of a young woman's mouth at every word she speaks; and a woman and her daughter throw her step-daughter, recently delivered of a child, out of the window into the river. In *The Goose Girl* a servant-girl is “put into a cask, stuck all round with sharp nails, and then dragged by two horses through street after street” till she is dead. In *Rapunzel* a beautiful girl of twelve is shut up alone in a tower. A witch “gave her a couple of blows with her left hand, and taking a pair of scissors in her right, she cut off all her beautiful hair. . . . Then she . . . took the poor maiden into a great desert, and left her to die. . . .” In *The Drummer* a young girl is imprisoned on a glass mountain. In one story a young girl is turned into a raven, and in another into a snake.

“This odious theme, the imprisonment and persecution of young girls, is everywhere,” says the Professor. “Students of psychology will know what deductions to make from this fact. Historians will give it due weight in the chapters on Poland and Czechoslovakia. Parents, it is to be hoped, will withdraw the book from the nursery.”

A. P. H.

Our Adjutant's Bath

DURING the recent cold spell our Station was rather badly hit. Our pilots used most impassioned language as they tried to put their machines down gently on a surface which grew more and more like cast-iron every day. In our Mess even the beer froze solid and burst the bottles, and economical people carried off lumps to their huts and melted them down in kettles. And one morning our Adjutant woke up to find his only set of false teeth embedded in the centre of a solid block of ice which, the evening before, was the water in his tooth-glass. He missed his breakfast that morning, arrived at his office late, and it wasn't until nearly midday that he was able to gnash his teeth at defaulters in anything like comfort.

Our own bathing facilities were of course all frozen up, so that night we went into the nearby French town to get a bath at the hotel. Our Adjutant, who is very conservative, went with us under protest. He was perfectly certain the French didn't know how to instal a proper bath. Grumblingly he paid his fifteen francs, and grumbly he mounted to the room allotted to him. His first painful discovery was that the bath was far shorter than the baths he was used to in England. His next was that there was no soap. He then discovered that the taps and outlet were not at one end of the bath, where all decent Christians ought to have them. The taps were midway down one side, and the outlet hole was in the middle. And he finally informed the world that his bath had Hot and Cold taps which were purely ornamental. They had no spouts by which the promised hot and cold might emerge. The plumber had undoubtedly forgotten them, and of course no one had as yet noticed the trifling omission. It was, he announced loudly, just what he had expected.

Alarmed by all the noise the *femme-de-chambre* appeared and took in the situation at a glance. She turned on the hot tap and a jet of positively boiling water shot up most unexpectedly through the outlet opening in the middle of the bath. Turning it off, she opened the cold tap and an equally powerful cold jet came up through the same opening. Turning that off, she then gave the outlet lever a flick, and all the water promptly vanished down the same hole.

Our Adjutant looked on with fascinated eyes. What, he wondered, would happen if all three operations were

performed simultaneously? He could scarcely wait for her to leave the room before essaying the experiment. The result was startling. There was a sharp explosion somewhere in the bowels of the long-suffering bath, a cloud of steam gushed up through the outlet hole, and a loud yell of fury from the next-door bathroom seemed to indicate that the complexities of French plumbing were even greater than our Adjutant had suspected.

Somewhat shaken, he hastily ended his experiments and allowed the bath to fill in a more normal way. For well over half an hour he lay in it blissfully at peace with the world. Slowly the water grew colder and at length our

Adjutant noticed it. Lazily he stretched up a hand and turned on the hot tap. Alas, alas! he had by now quite forgotten that he was not in an English bath. The boiling jet promptly came into action up the outlet hole, and half a second later, with a yell of anguish, our Adjutant left the bath.

It was quite two days before we eventually learned why he wouldn't sit down in his office and insisted on taking his meals from the Mess mantelpiece. The French, we at last gathered, might be a very civilised nation, but in his opinion they had a lot to learn about baths. But, as our Padre very fairly pointed out, so too, apparently, had our Adjutant.



"Yes! Yes! Our dear Fuehrer, of course; but name some earlier King of hateful England."



“Guess who.”

Behind the Lines

XXV.—Talk

SEATED one night at the wireless,
Weary and ill at ease
(The fire was out, and the fireless
Room had begun to freeze),
I gave a twitch to the needle,
I pressed the button for “Wave,”
And voices started to wheedle,
Voices started to rave.

I pottered from Rome to Warsaw,
I twiddled from Russ to Finn,
And, steering a zig-zag course, saw
The moon come up in Berlin;
I sauntered from Prague to Oslo,
I lingered in old Madrid—
And heard, wherever I was, low
Consonants grate and skid.

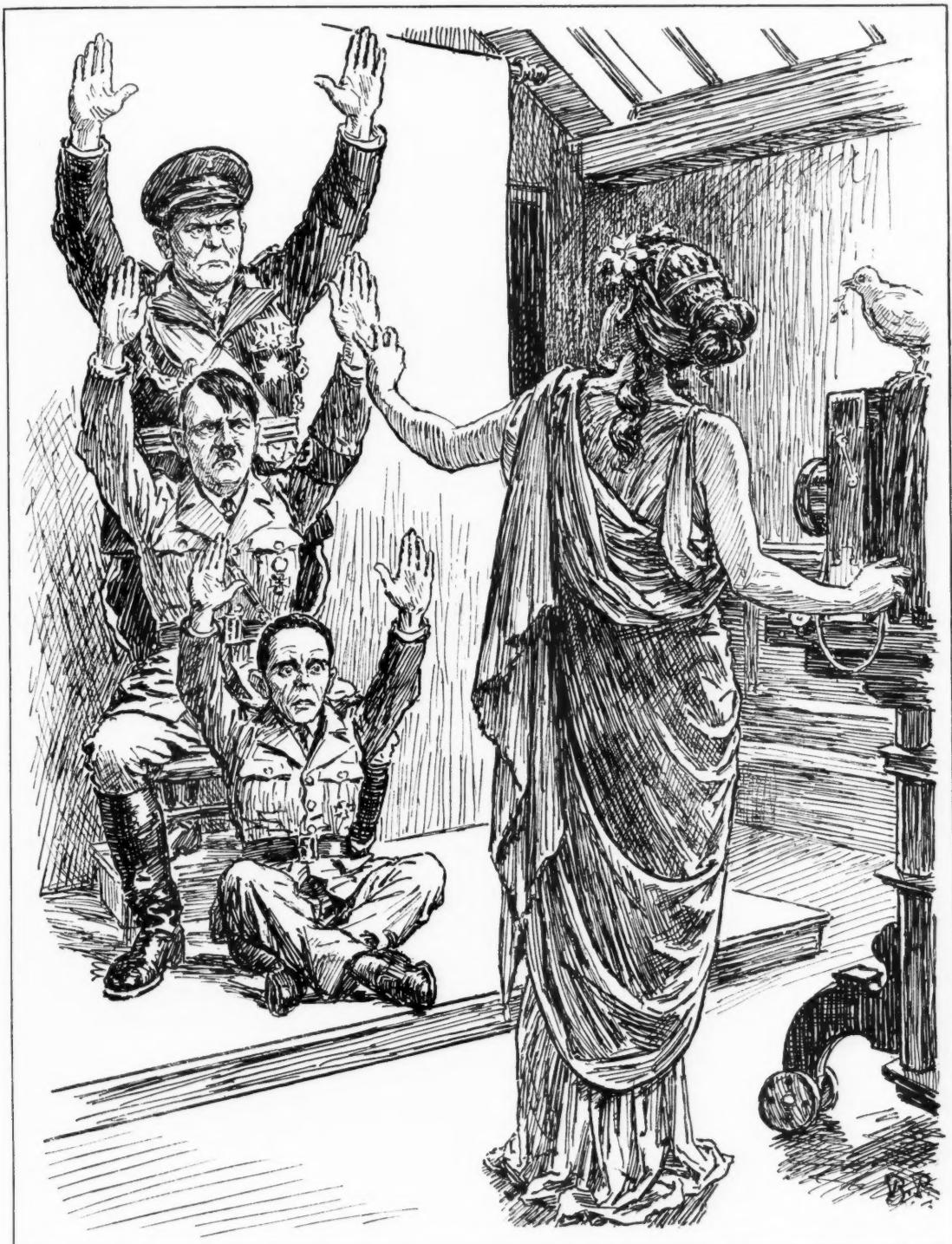
I twiddled the “Vol. Controller,”
I twiddled two knobs as one,
And waves from seas that were Polar
Joined waves from seas in the sun:

And rivers which rolled from Florence
In waves which broke at the crest
Met Moscow’s thundering torrents
And trickled to Budapest.

Wherever I stayed the needle,
However remote the shore,
A face would whinny and wheedle,
A face would bellow and roar.
I could picture it flushed and sweating,
I pictured it tense and white,
I said “And I wouldn’t mind betting
It’s just what he said last night.”

A hundred vehement faces,
Shallow and flushed and fat,
Telling you what the case is
For this and the other and that. . . .
And every night at eleven,
As sound streams up to the skies,
Truth listens-in from Heaven
And climbs on her Cross, and dies.

A. A. M.



DESIGN FOR A PHOTOGRAPH

Peace. "There—that's exactly the way I want you!"



THE SWEEPERS OF THE SEA

MR. PUNCH. "RISKY WORK, ISN'T IT?"
 TRAWLER SKIPPER. "THAT'S WHY THERE'S A HUNDRED THOUSAND
 OF US DOING IT."

1916 and 1940

Mr. PUNCH'S HOSPITAL COMFORTS FUND

YOU are asked to think of the Navy at sea, the men in the trenches, the men flying, the men in mine-sweepers, searchlight posts, anti-aircraft stations. All are in exposed, cold, wet situations. They need Balaclava helmets, stockings, gloves and woollen waistcoats.

Mr. Punch has already distributed large quantities of materials of all kinds, but there is a great deal more to be done and the need for woollen articles is still very urgent. Every penny subscribed will be used for the comfort of

the men serving, or Hospital patients, and no expenses whatever will be deducted. Though we know well that these are days of privation and self-denial for all, we yet ask you, those who can, to send us donations, large or small, according to your means; for experience in the last war has proved a hundred times over how urgent is the call and how invaluable is the assistance that can be rendered. Will you please address all contributions and inquiries to: Punch Hospital Comforts Fund, 10 Bouvierie Street, London, E.C.4.



"Of course you would forget to bring any sugar or butter!"

Sidney Pipple and Geraldine Jones

THERE was once a good-looking young man named Sidney Pipple who sold shoes for a Mr. Benbow whose shop was called Estelle Chaus-sures Chic. Sidney was what is known in the trade as tactful because when ladies came in for shoes he would say Size five Madam? and then reach down the sevens or eights that intuition told him would be wanted.

Well one day Sidney was reducing shoes from twelve and eleven to thirteen and nine ready for Estelle's sale when a beautiful girl came in and said Good afternoon I want some brown suede shoes size six. From force of habit Sidney reached for the eights and said Try these fives but the girl said No I really do take a six and no kidding. No kidding Sidney said Just plain suede. Sidney he said to himself Here is a beautiful girl who strangely enough also tells the truth but unless you act quickly she will go out of your life for ever or at least until she needs more shoes so instead of wrapping up a pair of sixes he wrapped up a pair of

fives. He handed them to her and she said Thank you good afternoon and he said Good afternoon thank you but to himself he said Aha because he knew that she would have to come back with them and then perhaps he would have a chance to talk to her about other things besides shoes.

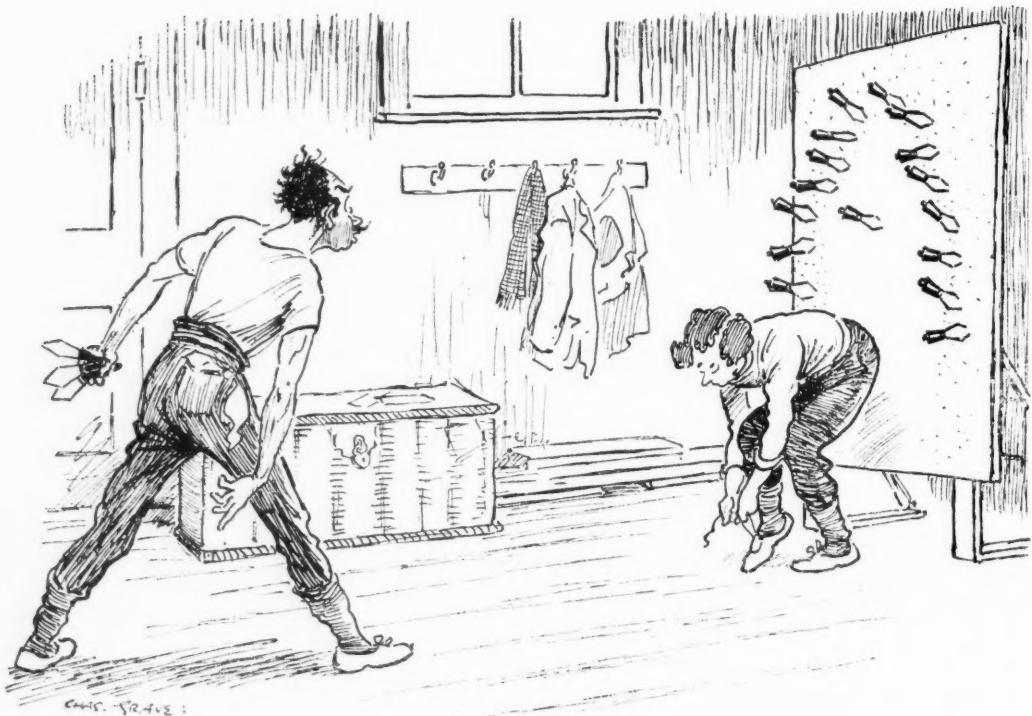
WELL next day the beautiful girl came in and said It is ridiculous those shoes you sold me definitely dont fit me at all so where is the manager? Having his lunch Sidney said. Then Ill wait the girl said. He is a very slow eater Sidney said. Then Ill sit down the girl said.

So she sat down and Sidney said Well spring will soon be here wont it? Will it? the girl said. Why yes Sidney said We have summer then we have autumn then we have winter and then we have spring. The four seasons they call them he said. Well well the girl said What will they think of next so after that neither of them said anything until Sidney said Ah here he is

Mr. Benbow this lady has a complaint. I am sorry Madam Mr. Benbow said But I am not a M.D. Your assistant is the girl said He fits me with sixes and wraps me up fives. Good gracious me Mr. Benbow said Please please accept my apologies give this lady sixes at once this very minute Pipple. Yessir Sidney said Here they are Madam. Miss Geraldine Jones is the name the girl said Thank you good afternoon and Sidney said Good afternoon thank you.

When the girl had gone Mr. Benbow said Well Sidney what have you got to say for yourself? and Sidney said Geraldine Jones. Mr. Benbow said What? and Sidney said Geraldine Jones Geraldine Jones oh what poetry but all Mr. Benbow said Poetry pah!

That evening as there were only two hundred and twelve Joneses in the local directory Sidney began calling on them to ask if they had a daughter named Geraldine but when fifty-four people had said No certainly not or words to that effect he decided to call



"Tick-Tock . . . look what you've made me do with your fidgeting!"

it a day. He went home and said Oh hullo Mother I have been looking for Geraldine Jones what is for supper? and his mother said Steak and kidney pudding who is this girl? It smells good Sidney said She is the girl I love. It is good Mrs. Pipple said What is she like where did you meet and so on and so on as mothers do. Mother Sidney said I realise now that love and steak and kidney pudding are the finest things in the world so leave me alone with my thoughts and another helping. Then marry a girl who can cook one Mrs. Pipple said So that if and when the flames of love to glowing embers turn you will have something to fall back on.

WELL next morning while Sidney and Mr. Benbow were discussing which shoemaker made the first last in came Geraldine in a dudgeon as high as her heels and said Mr. Benbow he has darned well done it again. Who has done what pray? Mr. Benbow said. Your so called assistant Geraldine said Those sixes yesterday were sevens the fool. Mr. Benbow said Good heavens

you dont say so and Geraldine said Dont be ridiculous I have said so so Mr. Benbow apologised until he was blue in the face instead of just blue where he shaved as he usually was and Sidney wrapped up a pair of sixes and said Miss Jones all this is beyond me but I am ever so sorry and Geraldine said I should think so too thank you good afternoon and Sidney said Good afternoon thank you.

When Geraldine had gone Mr. Benbow said Sidney everyone says I am a reasonable man everyone except my wife that is but this has happened once too often and if it happens twice too often you go so put that in your pipe and smoke it. But I dont smoke Sidney said. Then learn Mr. Benbow said heartlessly.

That evening Sidney looked harder than ever for Geraldine because in spite of everything he thought she was the only girl in the world as no one had ever told him about there still being nice fish in the sea even after years of fishing but when seventy-six Joneses had said they hadn't a daughter named Geraldine or at least they

wouldn't own up to it Sidney had half a pint of mild ale and tried to forget it all.

WELL next morning while Sidney and Mr. Benbow were ignoring each other Geraldine rushed in and flung a parcel at Mr. Benbow. Eights eights eights she shouted. Pipple Mr. Benbow said I am no camel but this is certainly the last straw you are fired as from now well what are you waiting for go on go on. There must be some mistake Sidney said. Ah yes Mr. Benbow said If you are fired I should say go off so Sidney bowed to the inevitable and Geraldine and went off.

He was just asking a taxi driver to drive him to drink when Geraldine came out and said What are you going to do now eh? and he said Goodness knows now I've lost my job I can't ask the girl I love to marry me. Geraldine said Who is she? and he said Why you and she said What me? and he said Yes I love you I love you there now I've said it. Father will give you a job Geraldine said so Sidney said Then I love you very much indeed so she took

him home and said Oh Dad this is Mr. Sidney Pipple and her father said Oh good afternoon how much did you get with Estelle? and Sidney said Three pounds per week and commission. Well Geraldines father said I offer you two pounds ten per week and commission what about it? Oh thank you thank you Sidney said Selling what? Geraldines father said Shoes and Sidney said What? and Geraldines father said Yes every time you wrapped a pair of sixes for Geraldine she brought back another sized pair from my stock so that you would eventually be fired because people dont have to pay so much to people who have been fired and that means you will have an incentive to work hard so as to make up on commission see?

Well Sidney said I know business is business but even so. Dont you believe it Geraldines father said Business is terrible that is why I wanted the best shoe salesman in the trade see? Oh Sidney said Well Geraldine I deceived you once for love but you deceived me twice for purely business reasons so I am cooling off. Then Geraldine burst into tears and her father said There there there so Sidney said Do you really care? I think you are as wonderful as your mother probably does Geraldine said Which is saying something. Well of course if thats so Sidney said Will you marry me if you can cook steak and kidney pudding? Geraldine said I can and I will so they were married and Sidney worked very hard and all the ladies flocked to buy shoes from him because they said he was so charming meaning of course tactful.

AND no matter how beautiful or A truthful Sidneys customers are he never bothers his head about them now because his firms motto is experientia docet which he now knows means you dont find out until it is too late so when they say Thank you good afternoon all he ever says is Good afternoon thank you.

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Quite Different

"Later troops arrived who looked quite different—infantry exhausted by long marches, trains and artillery driven by horses."—*The New Statesman and Nation*.

• •

"Mr. Morley, who is 31, made his stage début at 20 as the pirate in 'Treasure Island,' at the Strand Theatre."

Daily Paper.

Now we come to think of it, there was a pirate in *Treasure Island*.

PACE among leaves,
Rest among barley sheaves,
Silence and thistledown.

Sounds in the street,
Sweethearts to meet,
Lamplight in town.

Things that were growing,
Seeds wanting sowing,
Hens to be fed.

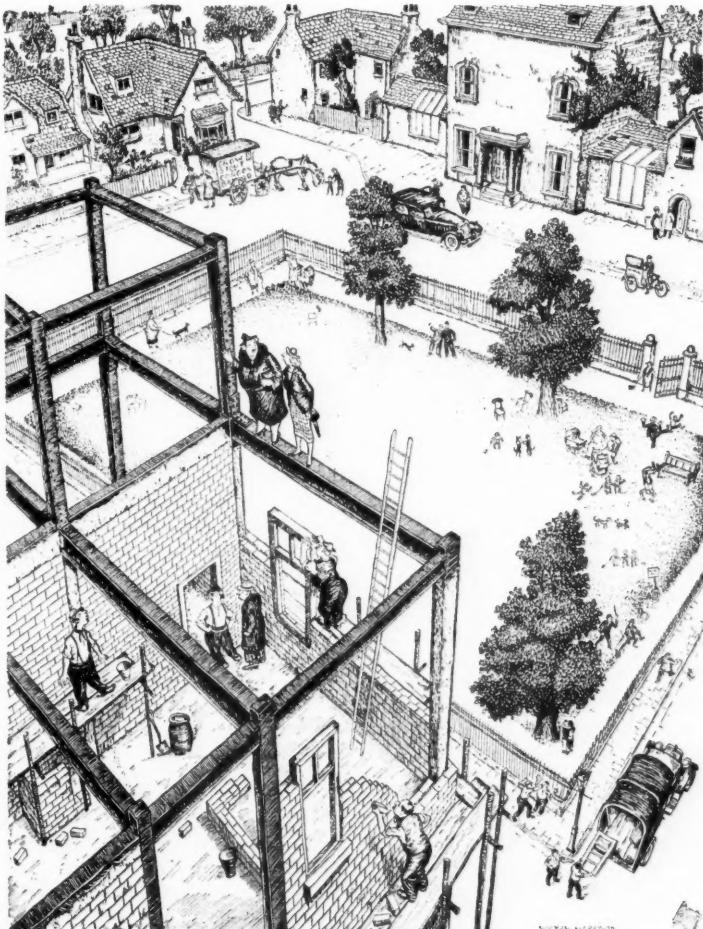
Things that don't matter much—
Slippers and smiles and such;
Things someone said.

Ordinary men to meet,
Ordinary things to eat,
Bed at eleven.

Things that to soldiers seem
Only a scattered dream,
Dearer than Heaven.

Things rooted in the soil,
Leisure that's bought with toil,
Lightly they sell.

Things they are loth to lose
Gladly they give and choose
Consort with Hell.



"... and that's going to be Hubby's little den."

My Cousin Arthur's Profession

MY Cousin Arthur was two years older than my elder brother Jim. He was a pimply youth who was always playing practical jokes on people, and my mother was terrified that he would exert an evil influence on all three of us.

One day my mother had a letter from my Cousin Arthur's mother to say that he was in trouble. The police had found him stuffing paper up the drain-pipes of people's houses and setting it alight so that the people would be alarmed by the roaring noise thus made. Arthur had appeared before a magistrate and had received a severe warning.

This interesting information did not reach my elder brother Jim, my younger brother Henry, or me. My mother concealed it until she was alone with my father. Then she persuaded him to forbid my Cousin Arthur to visit us any more. She said that he had disgraced the family by appearing before a magistrate and also was likely to debauch her own innocent children. My father agreed with her and said that we must not be allowed to know what Arthur had done. He believed that my elder brother Jim had only refrained from stuffing paper up drain-pipes and setting it alight because he had not discovered that a roaring noise could thus be produced.

We went about unaware that Nemesis had overtaken my Cousin Arthur until my elder brother Jim one day asked when he would be coming to see us again. My father was seized with a fit of coughing and my mother looked angry.

"He isn't coming any more," she said.

"Why not?" asked my elder brother Jim.

My father rapped on the table with the handle of his knife and told Jim not to bother his mother with foolish questions, but my mother had, by this time, recovered her presence of mind. She told my father not to interfere and announced that my Cousin Arthur had gone away for a long time and that we were not to worry about him, as he would be all right.

My elder brother Jim, my younger brother Henry and I spent the rest of the day speculating on what had happened to my Cousin Arthur. We guessed that, for some reason, he was in disgrace, but we could think of no way of discovering why.

The following morning, after breakfast, my elder brother Jim whispered

to my younger brother Henry and me that we were to follow him to the wash-house. There, after peeping through the window in a melodramatic manner, he told us that he had had a letter from my Cousin Arthur containing the most startling news. It would be no good showing us the letter as it was written in code, but he was willing to divulge its contents if we would pay him a halfpenny each. My younger brother Henry and I were so eager that we wanted to hear the news at once, but my elder brother Jim's lips were sealed until we had fetched our half-pennies from our money-boxes in the bedroom and handed them over.

He then told us a most extraordinary story. He said that my Cousin Arthur had left home to become a burglar. He had decided to do this because his father was too mean to buy him any new boots. He had gone to London, had already committed three burglaries and now possessed a great many pearls and diamonds. The letter, Jim said, was written on perfumed note-paper redolent of great wealth, and it was in code because Arthur's burglaries had been such clever ones that the police were baffled and had called in Sexton Blake, who was following my Cousin Arthur about in a large grey car.

My younger brother Henry and I both felt that this was well worth a halfpenny and we offered my elder brother Jim another if he would tell us everything that Arthur had written, but Jim declared that there was nothing else. He added, though, that Arthur had promised to write again as he was very fond of Jim and had even offered to have Jim up to stay with him and to let him do some burglaries as soon as he had got rid of Sexton Blake.

After this Jim had exactly as many letters a week as we had halfpennies in our pocket-money. We thought this very lucky, and towards the end of the week when we had already given Jim all our pocket-money, my younger brother Henry and I would be in a state of great alarm in case he had another letter. My Cousin Arthur was having an adventurous career. He had thrown pepper into the faces of the Beefeaters and stolen some of the Crown Jewels. He had been chased in a car by Sexton Blake, but, with great coolness, had driven his own car into a river at sixty miles an hour and had swum away under water so that Sexton Blake thought he was drowned. He had so many pearls that he could play

marbles with them and he could afford to use diamonds and rubies for shooting from his catapult.

This was very thrilling indeed, but after a while it occurred to my younger brother Henry and me that my elder brother Jim might be making it all up. As one halfpennyless week followed another this seemed more and more likely. In the end we taxed him with it.

My elder brother Jim was very indignant. He threatened to withhold any further letters, which rather frightened us. When we asked to see a piece of the perfumed notepaper he said that we could certainly see it, but that it would cost us a shilling each. This seemed to us a reasonable request, but we had no shillings. Finally, my elder brother Jim told us that in any case all our doubts would soon be settled because he had asked a great favour of my Cousin Arthur. He made us understand that, as a rule, Arthur only burgled for jewels and other precious stones, but that for Jim's sake he was going to come all the way from London and burgle our house.

In our hearts my younger brother Henry and I still believed that my elder brother Jim was making it all up. We thought that he would go down in the night and burgle the house himself to make it look as though my Cousin Arthur had visited us. Remembering the many halfpennies Jim had squeezed from us we determined to give him a shock.

My elder brother Jim told us that my Cousin Arthur had agreed to burgle the dining-room, where all the silver was kept, and to leave the rest of the house alone. Accordingly, we went to bed early that night but did not undress. As soon as we heard my father and my mother come upstairs we tip-toed down to the dining-room and secreted ourselves behind the long velvet curtains in front of one of the windows. We intended to wait until my elder brother Jim arrived and then spring out on him in the dark and surprise him.

We had been waiting for half an hour when it struck my younger brother Henry that it was just possible that my elder brother Jim had been telling the truth and that my Cousin Arthur would appear. He wanted to know how we could tell, if the intruder worked without a light. Neither of us was very keen on springing out to surprise my Cousin Arthur. He was much bigger than Jim and was, moreover, a genuine desperado. We thought

he might be armed, or at least carry a catapult.

As we discussed this matter my younger brother Henry and I became more and more convinced that my elder brother Jim was already fast asleep and that my Cousin Arthur was about to break into the house. Suddenly there was an ominous creak on the staircase and our hearts stood still.

In our terror one thought entered the heads of my younger brother Henry and me. We must fetch a policeman. We crept silently out of the dining-room, unbolted the front door and ran as hard as we could to the residence of Constable Meaker.

The constable had just completed his round and was sitting down to a steak-and-kidney pudding when he was brought to his door by our beating and yelling. We told him that a burglar was burgling our house. Visions of promotion rose before Constable Meaker's eyes. He wiped the lower part of his face with a pocket handkerchief and swallowed a mouthful of steak.

"We'll catch him red-handed," he said, pulling on his tunic.

The constable knew our house well, and as soon as we told him that the burglar would be in the dining-room he formulated a plan. He said that it would be best to frighten the burglar out of the house rather than go in to meet him, in case he was armed. He told my younger brother Henry and me to go around to the back and to throw a large stone through the dining-room window facing that way. This would force the burglar to make his getaway through the opposite window and Constable Meaker would be waiting in the street to pounce upon him. We went around to the back, my younger brother Henry picked up a fair-sized stone and I threw it as hard as I could. My aim was accurate and the stone flew through the window, shattering the glass and making a tremendous clatter.

This noise awakened my father and my mother. They sat up in their bed and my mother said, "Burglars." My father said he thought it was a cat, but my mother made him put on his trousers and go down to investigate. My father thought, as he put on his trousers, that it would be better to fetch Constable Meaker, so he put on his shoes as well.

Meanwhile, the constable was standing in the street and wondering why the burglar had not climbed out of the dining-room window. He crept nearer and stationed himself midway between the window and the front door. As he did so, the door opened quietly and a dark figure slipped out. Constable

Meaker did not hesitate. He gripped his truncheon and smashed it down upon the head of the dark figure. In his mind he was already writing his report and receiving congratulations from the Chief Constable in person. He did not allow his prisoner a chance of escape. Snapping on a pair of handcuffs, he stood him on his feet, lifted him by the fireman's lift, carried him to the constabulary house and locked him in the coal-cellars. Then only did he return to his pudding.

When my father did not return to the bedroom my mother became alarmed. She slipped on a dressing-gown, lit a candle and, trembling with fright, went downstairs to discover what had happened to him. She stood in the hall and listened, but could hear no sound. Then she looked into the study and then into the dining-room. As she opened the dining-room door a horrid sight met her gaze. My elder brother Jim was lying there, stunned by the stone which I had thrown through the dining-room window. My mother shrieked as loudly as she could and my younger brother Henry and I came running in.

While we were reviving my elder brother Jim, my younger brother Henry and I kept telling my mother that my Cousin Arthur had been burgling the house and that we believed he had been caught by Constable Meaker. Between us we carried Jim to his room and accompanied my mother to Constable Meaker's house, where she demanded to see the prisoner. My father was just recovering consciousness when my mother found him in the coal-cellars.

It proved impossible to convince Constable Meaker that there was no burglar in our house, and he insisted on spending the night tramping up and down our hall. For several days he hung about the precincts, keeping an eye on things.

When my father was well enough he gave my elder brother Jim a lecture. He said that Jim had maligned my Cousin Arthur's character. Arthur had never stolen anything. He had only stuffed paper up the drain-pipes of people's houses and set it alight so that the people would be alarmed by the roaring noise thus made. My elder brother Jim had also used false pretences to obtain halfpennies.

That same afternoon Constable Meaker made his arrest. He arrested my elder brother Jim for stuffing paper up one of Mr. Copplestone's drain-pipes and setting it alight.

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Two Ghosts

or, Scuttle and Scrap

"I AM an Admiral. My name was sweet;
I lay at ease among the sailor shades."

"I am a Captain. Dying in defeat,
I did some honour to the best of trades."

"But one called Hitler rules the German Fleet
And sells our ship for safety-razor blades."

A. P. H.



"Do you ever get the feeling that the neighbours are spying on us?"

At the Play

"NAP HAND" (ALDWYCH)

THIS farce, by Mr. VERNON SYLVADINE and Mr. GUY BOLTON, starts very well with the promise of satire on the whole idiotic ballyhoo of "quads" and "quins," and then sadly dies away into a conventional welter of mistaken identity, marital suspicion and breathless rushing about. It continues to have moments, for Mr. RALPH LYNN and Mr. CHARLES HESLOP can be funny on very little, but it is not nearly funny enough to deserve to survive, though I dare say it will.

The first scene opens on two distracted husbands in the waiting-room of a maternity home on the South Coast. Neither is delighted at the thought of the responsibilities dawning at that moment upstairs. Nor is a third husband—a massive Italian gentleman—enthusiastic, for he has already fathered more children than could be anything but an embarrassment. Indeed he is offering his latest to anyone who cares to take it away.

Then comes to Mr. LYNN and Mr. HESLOP, buoyed up perilously on whisky, the news that each is the father of twins. Only fathers of twins will know how accurately they interpret the overwhelming emotions of those first seconds after an unthinking nurse has lightly overturned their world with a few callous words opening up a vista of social humiliation, nervous collapse and economic ruin; but it is powerful work and based, I should say, on sound general principles.

A sudden inspiration alters the whole picture. Co-ordination of all sorts being in the fashion, why not amalgamate two failing concerns under one name and one board of

directors? That would make quads, and quads, heaven knows, have been a paying proposition; but why not go one better and make it quins by adopting the Italian gentleman's

bambinous excess? The difference between quads and quins in net profit being the difference between a solid little local business and a nation-wide chain-store.

The Italian gentleman rapturously agrees. The authorities at the home are squared, intentions to inform the various mothers as soon as they are well enough are vaguely but honourably entertained, and all is set for what one hopes is going to be an unmerciful rag of the methods by which shrewd advertising experts have turned a minor freak of Nature, of small interest except to gynaecologists, into a stunt played up with unflinching vulgarity. What better opportunity for guying the unparalleled cynicism with which dazed parents are gradually persuaded that, far from having made themselves, as they had at first suspected, slightly ridiculous, they have done something of historical importance? We sit back in our seats and look forward to a fantastic procession of mayors and leader-writers and busybodies all deafened to the call of common sense by the magic tune piped by the Pans of publicity.



A PRACTICE SWING

Freddie Quibble Mr. RALPH LYNN



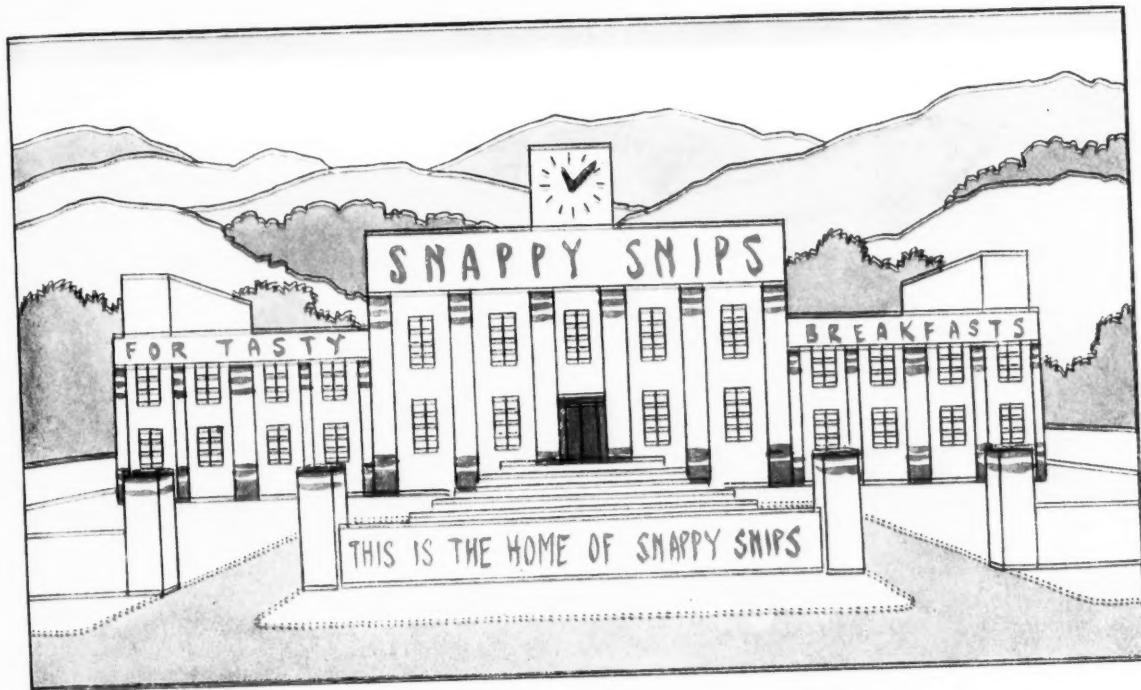
SURPRISE BLACK-OUT

Johnny Potter . Mr. CHARLES HESLOP | Freddie Quibble . Mr. RALPH LYNN
 Marjory Potter . Miss KAY WALSH | Mr. Joll . Mr. CHARLES LEFEAUX
 Nurse McClintock . Miss BERTHA BELMORE

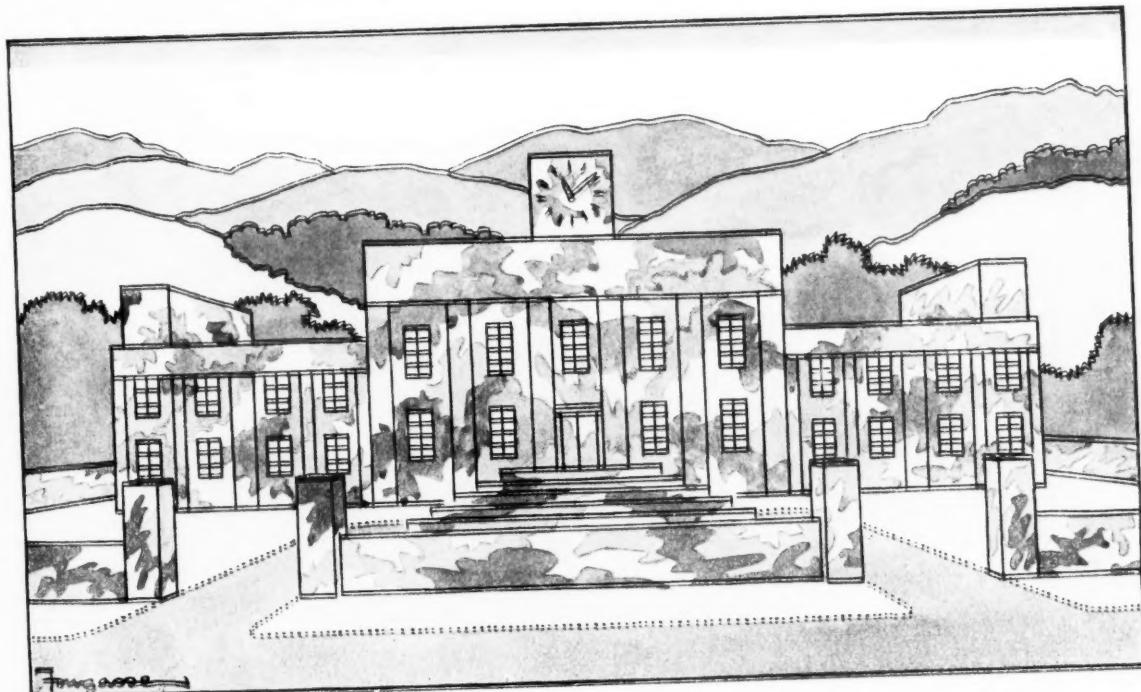
But our authors fail us. After some good newspaper-cuttings flashed on to a screen, satire evaporates and the farce settles down to a pedestrian pace. The substitution of a black baby for one of the Big Five at the moment when a photograph is about to establish their claim to ten thousand pounds resuscitates it briefly, but only briefly.

Mr. LYNN and Mr. HESLOP, fooling bravely, have loyal support from Miss BERTHA BELMORE, Miss KAY WALSH, Miss VALERIE TUDOR, Mr. CHARLES LEFEAUX, Mr. FRANCIS DE WOLFF and others. Unavailingly, I'm afraid.

ERIC.



When one looks around one, one has to admit that not every change brought about by the war—

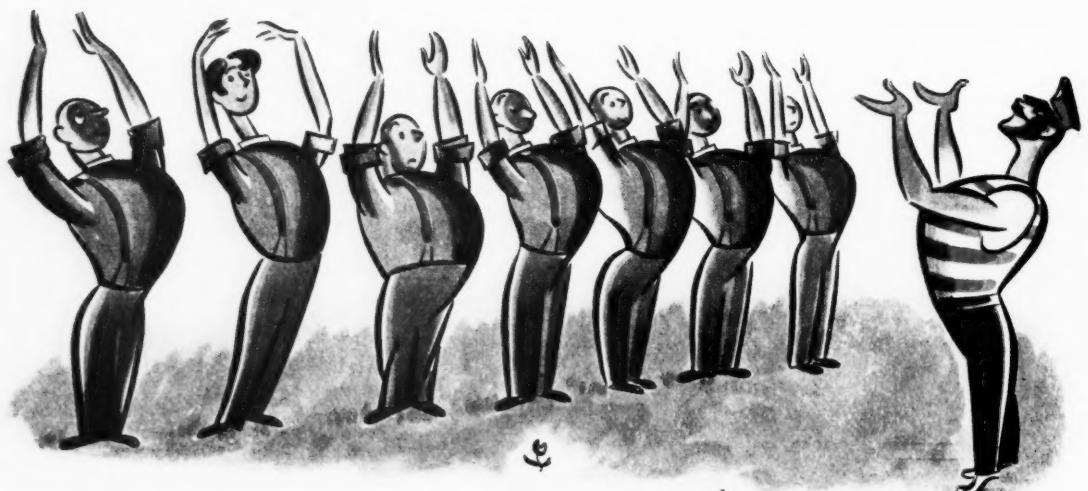
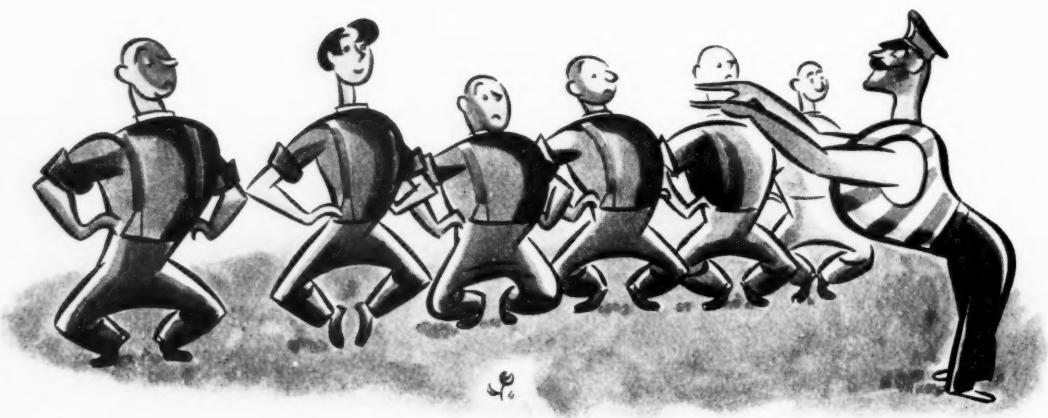


—has been for the worse.

THE CHANGING FACE OF BRITAIN AGAIN

PUNCH SPRING NUMBER

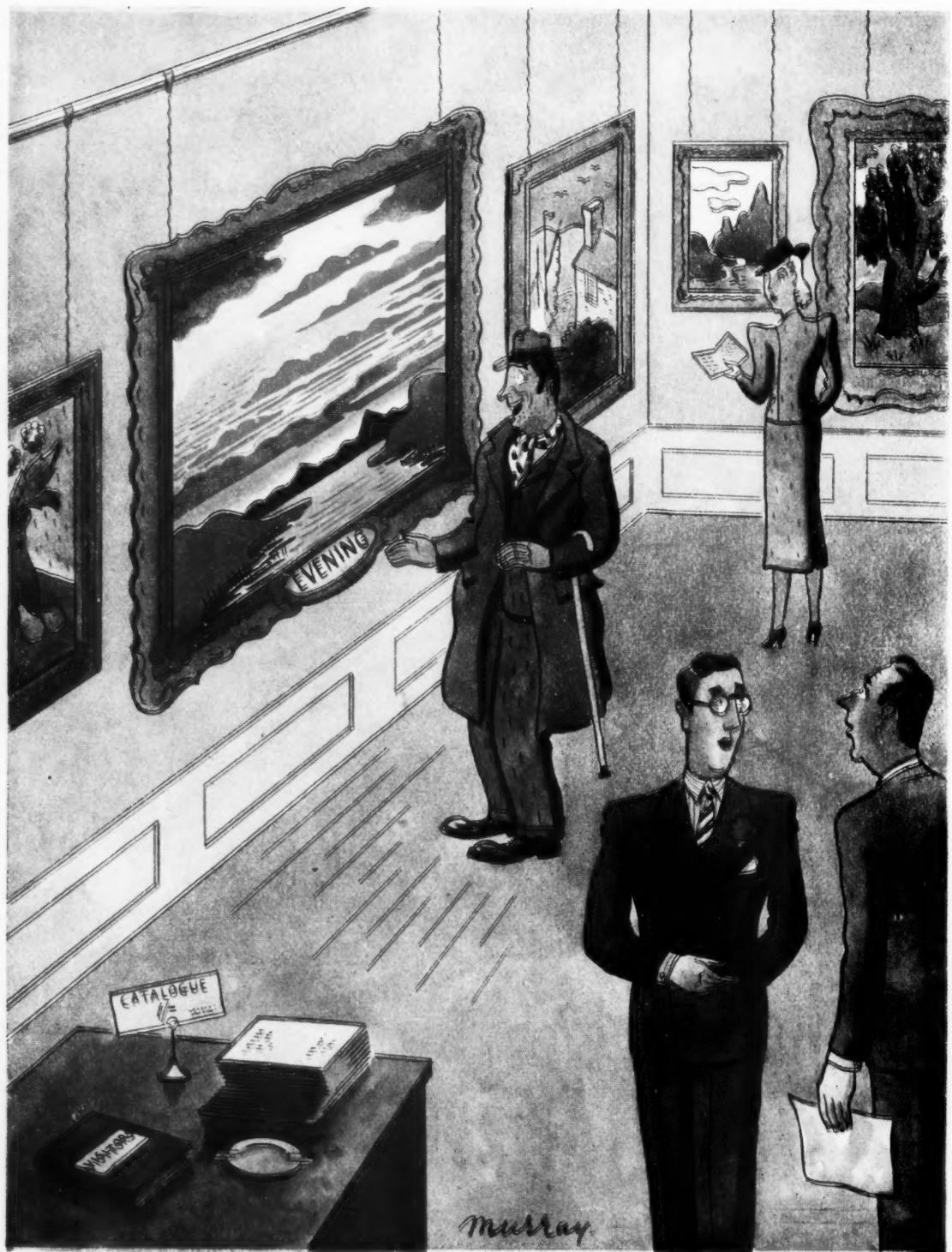
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PUNCH SPRING NUMBER





"Well, I can only presume he's a shepherd."



"Turn off that gramophone a second!"

Conversation Lozenges

HAVING been "out of" Conversation Lozenges for just twenty years, Mrs. O'Hara got in a new stock last month. Goaded into unwilling action by the repeated demands of an English visitor at Mrs. Fitzgerald's for these old-fashioned aids to better acquaintance, the shop-owner at last ordered the once popular sweets from a Dublin firm; and in due course they arrived in Rathberry. "She had me achtchilly moidered for them lozenges," Mrs. O'Hara said of her importunate customer, "so I got them in the latther end, an' there's no two ways in sayin' it, but they're terrible pass-remarkable, so they are." Then, with memories of half-forgotten sweets of the same kind that used to say "God Bless Us," she added, "An' there isn't as much as one of them now that has anny sort of a pious aspiration wrote out on it."

When the lozenges came the Englishwoman bought half a pound, and she headed the rush for these latest additions to Mrs. O'Hara's confectionery store. Perhaps "rush" is

rather a misleading term—it took Mrs. O'Hara such a long time to weigh them out and to read for herself the intimate questions and the terse declarations so boldly printed on the pale pink hearts and the round white discs with their scalloped edges. When the purchaser was a particular friend she would even substitute a sweet bearing a more suitable inscription for one that seemed to her to be very little use to anyone, such as the infuriating legend, "O.K. Baby." So that very soon she had a considerable number of sweets that announced briefly "A Stitch in Time," these having been rejected by customers who preferred something a little more snappy, and would even have liked better the remark, "Let it Rip."

A large share of the visitor's original purchase found its way to Mrs. Fitzgerald's kitchen, the would-be-helpful Englishwoman feeling sure that Delia and the ultra-cautious postman must find them useful as aids to a better and more rapid understanding. Carefully she picked out some really encouraging

remarks and presented the sweets to Delia; next, with even greater care, she chose some others and gave them to the somewhat suspicious postman. Then, with a gratified sense of having done her best for her hostess's cook, she waited for results that failed to come.

Weeks later the departed guest heard all about it from old Mrs. Fitzgerald, who told her in a letter. "Delia gave him a lozenge that said, 'Isn't it time we got married?'" she wrote, "and he took it away to study at his leisure. Next morning he answered the question by word of mouth. He said, 'Sure, no one would look at either of us now.' Delia gave the rest of her lozenges to the child that brings the papers; she told me they were 'too positive.'"

In the meantime Mrs. O'Hara was realising that the young people of to-day have no great use for Conversation Lozenges, except to eat them—a proceeding that never would have occurred to their ancestors. At first



"I've — — been down to — — Billingsgate getting — — local colour for a — — novel about — — fishporters."

this annoyed her intensely and gave her yet another grudge against the rising generation, whose freedom of speech has long been a sore trial to her. "I knew the day," she complained to a contemporary, "when you could be swingin' hands wid a fella for long enough, an' your whole conversazione would be done wid lozengers the like of them, an' they'd make no extortio on you at all, only to fiddle about in the bag till you'd get what you wanted to say, an' then give a presentation of it an' turn your back till he had it read. But the young hares that's goin' now doesn't be in want of anny

first aids, for they'll say a thing as soon as they think it. I do often be entirely scandalised when they come in here for cigarettes." And Mrs. O'Hara's eyes rolled upwards as if in a silent appeal to the Powers above to witness her horror of modern outspokenness. One thing she stoutly refused to do—that was to allow any dissatisfied customer to make a personal search among the sweets.

If they mentioned any inscription they particularly wanted she tried quite honestly to find it for them, but she must do so herself. As such a request meant a certain giving away

of their private affairs to the keenly interested shop-owner, it wasn't often made, and most of the buyers "chanced their arms" by purchasing a couple of ounces and trusting to luck that the sweets would include the one they wanted. But whether the right one was inscribed "Come sit beside me," or "Does the cap fit?" or "Were you ever in love?" or just "Cheerio," they kept to themselves, leaving the disappointed Mrs. O'Hara to come to her own conclusions instead of simply following clues of almost startling clarity. It was another grievance against the grandsons and the granddaughters of her old friends: with all their outspokenness they managed to give very little away.

Of more than one of the young women of Rathberry Mrs. O'Hara has said, "She come in here all illigence an' her face as brown as anny gipsy in spite to how little sun we had, an' I axed her was there a lozenge she'd like betther nor another, an' she wanted to know had I one wid 'Mind your own business' on it. An' didn't I instigate a search through the whole lot, an' it wasn't till she was gone that it kem over me what she meant be that, the brat! So when young Kevin Foley axed for some the next day I took one look at his head an' I says, 'Would you like the sweet that has "Where did you get that eternal wave?" wrote on it?' An' didn't he say he would? An' I had to let him at the box hisself before he'd be satisfied that it wasn't there; an' be the time he was done rootin' in it there was very few 'O.K. Babies,' I can tell you. They do go out-an'-out mad for that one, whatever charm is in it."

Yesterday there were two Conversation Lozenges left when a would-be customer called at the little shop, and both the sweets said "A Stitch in Time." In the face of numerous demands for the renewal of her stock, Mrs. O'Hara stoutly refuses to order any more. Strange as it may appear, their very popularity has been their death-warrant. "I won't ever get them agen," she says; "there's altogether too many people comin' in here for them."

D. M. L.

Using a wartime simile, Alderman — of Southgate Borough Council, described as "incendiary bombs" two maters "dropped" by County Alderman —, at the annual meeting of the Winchmore Hill Burges-es and Residents' Association on Monday night."—Suburban Paper.

We hardly know which of these two gentlemen deserves the greater censure.

Country Cousins

(Old Style—1939)

DEAREST LIZ,—No, worse luck! There's no Monte for me this year. It's Clayshire and Jim's country cousins. You know the couple, my dear—Ted and Mary. Ted's "head of the clan," and consideration is due (Jim says) to the claims of age; but I'm dashed if I see it, do you?

Anyhow, Liz, we're in for it! A dreary old barrack of stone. Fifteen miles from a town, with a "model farm" of its own. Nothing whatever to do, if you filled the place with the nation's

Smartest and brightest and best, instead of effete relations. How (as I said to Jim) can people like us support

A week—let alone a fortnight—of boredom at Turnip Court? Day after day the same. Take Ted: with his dog and his groom,

Breakfast at eight and he's off; and at night, when the fog-laden gloom

Muffles the mansion, he's back, with a partridge or two and a hare,

Welcomed of course by Mary, whose own particular flair (After doing her matronly duty in detail by mansion and master)

Is chicken-run, apiary, dairy and garden. I'd not put it past her

To make off at dawn for her orchard with a cargo of newly-bought trees,

Or stay out till dusk putting cloches over rows of invisible peas!

No wonder they're sleepy at dinner! No cocktails, my dear, though Ted's port

Keeps Jim with an object to live for—he never cared much about sport.

Picture it, Liz! Fourteen days, with no option! I call it dashed folly—

Blast Turnip Court and its inmates! say I,

Yours disgustedly, DOLLY.

(New Style—1940)

DEAREST LIZ,—We're in clover! Of course we've vacated the flat And we're down at Turnip Court—self, Jim, the Peke and the cat— Ted's and Mary's old place. Ted, you know, is head of the clan And feels, as it were, responsible—so we came when the war began.

Luckily Turnip Court is built to withstand assaults: Fifteen miles from a town, with leagues of cellars and vaults.

All the old fogies round have left in haste to rehearse Some sort of war-work or other—so really it might be worse!

Ted keeps us going with game, and as soon as they ration the meat

There'll be pickled pork in *saumur* from Boulestin's old receipt.

Mary's the perfect housewife! She'd have thriven under the Georges

When you simply sat and toped in between Mrs. Beeton-ish gorges.

What with her honey and eggs, and butter and cream from the dairy,

And ducklings hatching already—I take off my hat to Mary!

And of course if we weren't here, it would be evacuees—

There are six as it is and two teachers (my foot!) of the L.C.C.'s!

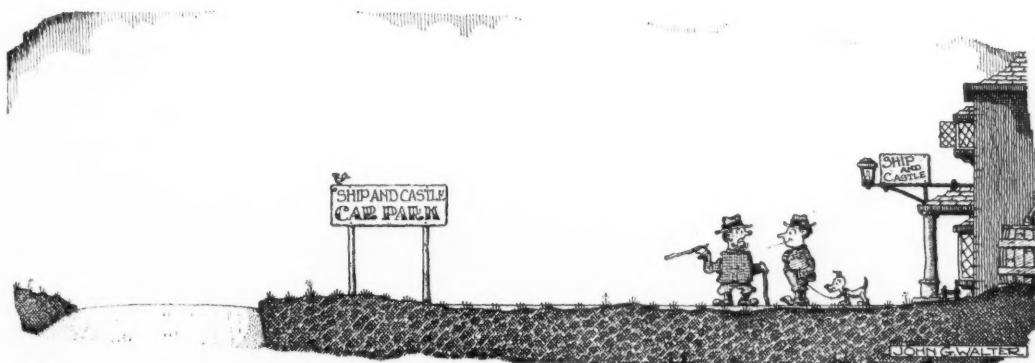
But the staff have them well in hand; and we have got over the worst

With Ted's and Mary's retainers—they were rather touchy at first.

Even Peke's little place in the sun has been wrested from Ted's old collie—

So, for the duration, it's Turnip Court!

Yours lightheartedly, DOLLY.



"I always said these new-fangled horseless carriages were only a passing craze."

Romance

"AND besides all that," I said, "everyone's getting married just now, and you'll feel frightfully out of it if you don't join the glad throng."

"That may be so," said Ann, "but I can get married without marrying you."

"Ah, but can you?"

"Oh, yes, my dear. There's a queue from here to Hyde Park Corner."

"I doubt it," I said.

"The correct answer is, 'I know, but no one understands you as I do.' You're far from word-perfect. Not that you *do* understand me."

"I expect I understand all there is to understand."

"You do not," said Ann haughtily. "You know nothing of my past."

"Is there anything to know, except perhaps that you once put your tongue out at your nurse?"

"There's quite a lot to know. You'd

be surprised to hear that I've been married twice already."

"I should. But I should still be in favour of your having a third cut with me."

"That's quite nice of you. But you haven't heard all. When I say I've been married twice, once and a half would be nearer the truth. You see, my first husband left me at the end of a month."

"Just couldn't stand it?"

"I suppose so. And after a little I married again. Unfortunately I overlooked the fuss that's made about bigamy. Also I never thought anyone would find out. But they did. The police found out. I got two years, though actually I was in prison only eighteen months. I behaved so well that my sentence was reduced. But that may have been partly due to a dear old warder. He rather fell in love with me, I think."

I considered this. Then I said, "I thought there were wardresses in the female prisons."

"There usually are, but they were short of wardresses at the time."

"It's all very interesting. What prison were you in, by the way?"

"Brixham."

"Brixham? That's a small place to have a prison. You don't mean Brixton, by any chance?"

"Perhaps I do. Yes, Brixton. And Wormwood Scrubs the other time."

"There was another time, then?" I said.

"Yes. Shoplifting. It's awfully unfortunate, but I simply can't resist things sometimes. The first lift I got off with a caution. That was a blouse. I stuffed it up under my coat. But I tripped on the step coming out of the shop and it fell down. The second lift was some of those lovely large



"We also have it in General purple and Admiral maroon."



"Poor dear, she lives in constant dread of 'avin' the place knocked down by a bomb—anybody'd think it was 'er own 'ouse!"

peppermints. If you ever want to give me sweets, give me those."

"Wouldn't they bring rather painful memories?"

"Oh, no. I'm much too fond of them to be worried by a little thing like that."

There was a pause. "Is that all?" I asked.

"Well, that's enough to go on with."

"I shall have to give this a good deal of thought," I said, placing the tips of my fingers together and assuming an impressively judicial air. "I can't deny there are aspects of your case which

have a very ugly look, very ugly indeed. First of all, there's the reduction of your sentence. There was a smugness about the way in which you said 'I behaved so well' which was positively revolting. And then the warder who 'rather fell in love with you.' I don't suppose he did anything of the sort. I wonder if you're getting into the way of thinking everyone's in love with you. It's a complex from which people of wobbly minds do suffer sometimes."

"Darling!" said Ann.

"And then there's the dropping of

the blouse." Really, nothing would be safe with a girl who could do a thing like that. My uncle has given me some quite good glass. If you got at it the lot would be smashed in no time. No," I said, rising, "the thing's off. I attach little importance to the bigamy and the shoplifting. These are but incidents in the development of character. But smugness and clumsiness are inexcusable. Good-bye, Ann. Good-bye for ever."

"Good-bye for ever," said Ann. "And don't forget we're dining at eight to-night."

A. W. B.



"Roast beef and Somewhere-on-the-East-Coast pudding."

Our Booking-Office

(By Mr. Punch's Staff of Learned Clerks)

Getting Out of the Rut

AN autobiography one-fourth of which is taken up by a subaltern's reactions to the last war (not so very different from the reactions of other subalterns we have read of) may seem rather *vieux jeu* to-day. A chill seemed to fall when Mr. WESTON MARTYR turned from Yokohama to the Western Front, from uncharted adventure to the comparatively conventional Somme; and intensified with the realisation that—but for the brief interlude of that great sail from Falmouth to Long Island and back via Bermuda—this desertion was for good. His harvested wisdom on such subjects as story-writing and cities and getting out of the rut (which last he certainly practised in his own person) was shrewd, no doubt, and sound and heartening; but it was a wheaten substitute for those intoxicating wild oats. For the first part of these *Wandering Years* (BLACKWOOD, 7/6) had been so magnificent. Sailing-ships, the Boer War, gold-mining—with sidelights on the Chinese Labour question; pearls and trochus and sea-otter poaching—with sidelights on Russian officialdom; Ponape, Yokohama, the Bonins—with sidelights on Anglo-Oriental society; all seen with a cold understanding and told with the warmest humanity: what splendid stuff! Too splendid perhaps for any sequel; if you read the first half of this book you will read the best of it. In fairness be it added that if you do not you will be missing something *sui generis*, something inspiriting, something that in these dark days lifts the heart as a sea-shanty lifts the anchor.

The Little Girl Lost.

For a mere child, inexperienced and gallant, to accept on the threshold of life the distressing inheritance of illegitimacy is a cruel enough dilemma, and *Mirror of a Dead Lady* (LONGMANS, 8/3) reflects this unpromising realisation in the first act of a distinguished and moving novel. A Scots

journalist and a Chilean beauty succumb to belated wedlock for the sake of their children. The journalist dies; his wife marries again; *Kit*, the art student, characteristically snatches what funds are available; and her younger sister *Sylvia* is deported to Santiago by magnanimous but scandalised relations. *Sylvia's* native generosity, her fatal pliability, are both exploited and betrayed by this strange new world, a world which (with the best will possible) remains inevitably alien. *Sylvia* is too Scotch for South America, too South American for the mean commercial-minded Scots laird whose suit her aristocratic cousins practically purchase for her. There is an answer to *Sylvia's* riddle; but Miss HELEN DOUGLAS IRVINE allows her to miss it by a hair's-breadth. In a book whose local colour—French, Chilean and English—means all it does and should mean to impressionable youth, the *Valle Dorado*, with its recluse and intuitive influences, is outstanding.

International Domesticities

Three nations figure in the war,
Yet it's a friendly sort of strife
That SUSAN ERTZ in *One Fight More*
(HODDER AND STOUGHTON) brings to life;
The scene's Connecticut; the cause
Concerns a single family clan
With all its multiple in-laws—
French, English and American.

The question is, shall so-and-so
And such-and-such be free to wed?
The maiden's parents both say No;
But grandpapa says Go ahead.
And grandpapa, who's shrewd, benign,
And much beloved by all his brood,
Wins victories all along the line
And also heaps of gratitude.

A simple tale, one might suppose;
But that it certainly is not,
For SUSAN ERTZ most surely knows
How trifles complicate a plot;
Her cosmopolitan array
She probes completely through and through
And makes most entertaining play
Of their distinctive points of view.



"I said 'I wonder what this place was like before the war.'"



A LEAN DAY

Luncheon Hostess. "I DO HOPE YOU DON'T MIND, MRS. STOKER, BUT ON WEDNESDAYS WE ONLY HAVE MEAT AT DINNER."

Dinner Hostess. "I DO HOPE YOU DON'T MIND, MRS. STOKER, BUT ON WEDNESDAYS WE ONLY HAVE MEAT AT LUNCHEON."

Lewis Baumer, March 14th, 1917

Upton Sinclair Tells the World.

For some eighteen years, Mr. UPTON SINCLAIR tells us, he has supported himself by his pen, writing a great deal of stuff which he modestly confesses may have been below his best from the literary point of view, but never one line that did not express his sincere conviction. He has made a great deal of money and spent it all again in the sacred cause of Socialism. All this we are prepared to believe, and also that his crusades have not been without their effect in bettering the condition of workers in various fields. But *Telling the World* (WERNER LAURIE, 7/6), which is a volume made up of magazine articles, speeches, and letters written at various dates, would certainly seem to show that Mr. SINCLAIR's views have been sometimes slightly wrong-headed, at all events when he deals with European affairs. That is the worst of reprinting matter written or spoken two or three years ago. For example, he expresses the greatest admiration for the Soviet Union of Russia, the one country which in his opinion stands on a higher moral level than the rest—the capitalist nations of Europe and the United States. The Red Army, he maintains here, stands solely for defence, not aggression—a statement which reads curiously at the

present moment. We like better some of the writer's personal reminiscences, such as "My Long Love Affair," and his spiritualistic views in "The Unknown Universe."

Love's Not-so-Young Dream

It is so odd that David Brome, *A Man of Forty* (DENT, 7/6), should have already retired from the Civil Service on a comfortable pension that his subsequent adventures seem commonplace by comparison. And indeed there is nothing very unusual in the mischief which Satan finds for his idleness. For being forty, and fifteen years married, and, like so many of his coevals, still a romantic adolescent at heart, *David* falls heavily for a girl of half his years. The stresses resulting from this accident, for the man himself, for *Lydia* his wife and, though in a less degree—for she turns out to be a heartless little piece—for the beautiful *Mary*, are well and truly analysed by Mr. GERALD BULLETT; and they are not the less poignant because for none of these three do they lead to any irrevocably devastating dénouement. A dénouement there is, however, and a sensational one, for Mr. BULLETT has complicated his story, which has the neat construction of a well-made play, with the

unprincipled activities of *David*'s cousin *Adam*, a Lothario who makes it his business, though not in the cause of morality, to knock the orthodox triangle out of shape. *Adam*, in fact, the man of twenty-nine, is as central to the plot as *David*, and it is on his account that a narrative which, for all its emotional moments, has for five-sixths of its length progressed placidly enough, suddenly takes on the nature of a thriller. The reason for which it may be left to Mr. BULLETT urbanely to elucidate.

Roma veduta, fede perduta

In *This Rome of Ours* (RICH AND COWAN, 8/6) Miss AUGUSTA L. FRANCIS apparently attempts to do for Rome and its environs what CARMICHAEL, when he was Vice-Consul at Leghorn, did with such consummate charm for Tuscany. She attempts, but without CARMICHAEL'S tact and distinction, to interest the ordinary reader in the Catholic character and antecedents of local monuments. Three devout sight-seers—the writer, a highbrow friend called *Pellegrina* and a wealthy, rather mezzobrow aunt—set out to explore Rome, intermittently escorted by dukes, counts, noble guards and *monsignori*. *Pellegrina* the convoy—who when "she leaned back against a column and closed her eyes" looked "like a golden-brown wallflower"—can only be appreciated from a strictly Young Visiter-ish angle. Her archaeological information, however, is far sounder than her method of imparting it would lead you to suppose. Such comparatively unknown objectives as ROBERT PECKHAM'S tomb on the Coelian and the Madonna of Peace—sought by newly-married couples for the avoidance of future family wrangling—are discerningly recommended; *Aunt Julia's* meals revive delectable memories of a pre-war *cucina romana*; and all the illustrative photographs in the book are excellent.

The Husky Gives Tongue.

Talking animals are a charming and time-honoured fantasy, but what about animals who rush into print? Granted that a dog may speak of "waddling out for another hair of the cat that scratched me," or "raining cats and rabbits" or "give a man a bad name and you can bite him"—but should he say, in describing the Great War, "about that time the men beyond the edge of the world all agreed to have the deuce of a big scrap"? The truth is that a dog's day should be reported for him, and with all respects to *Black Beauty* and *Mémoires d'un Âne*, animals do not make

good autobiographers; but all the same *Husky*, by FRANK and KENNETH CONIBEAR (PETER DAVIES, 8/6), is a good healthy sporting story of a sledge-dog in the Frozen North. Though he never realises his ambition of running in a Hudson Bay Company's team, Cap the husky has his fair share of fighting, freezing, licking wounds, staggering, starving, racing, chasing and curling up to sleep. Judging from his photograph in the frontispiece, he was a fine shapely animal, and his story is straightforward, exciting and especially suitable for children, but he is the merest shadow compared with the heroes of JACK LONDON or of *My Dogs in the Northland*. He cannot compare with Buck, or Whitefang, or the team who ate the missionary's whip and his pony and finally his newly-built sealskin church. There is nothing personal to be said against Cap, but where are the sledge-dogs, as well as the snows, of yesteryear?

Bequest

No sympathy need be wasted upon *Mrs. le Planter*, who was the first victim in *Death Starts a Rumour* (NICHOLSON AND WATSON, 7/6). *Superintendent Mallet* called her "a nasty old cuss," and when she died suddenly and left a considerable fortune to her nephew no tears were shed. But presently anonymous letters began to reach the young heir, and finding himself suspected of having killed his aunt he reassembled the house-party that had been present when she died. Then another startlingly sudden death occurred, and on this occasion there was no doubt whatever that deliberate murder had been committed. Miss MARY FITT has set her readers an engrossing problem to solve, but her stories would lose nothing in force and would gain fragrance

if the people of her imagination were a little more attractive.

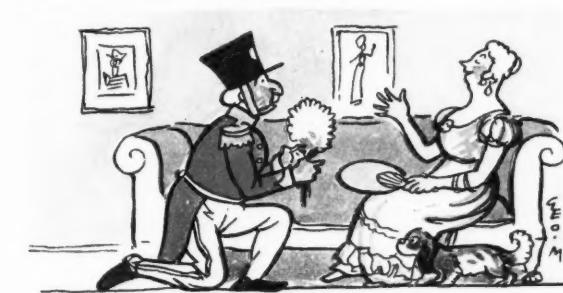
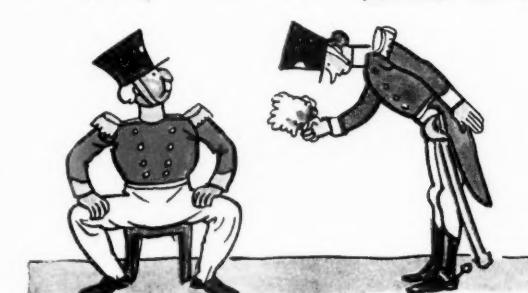
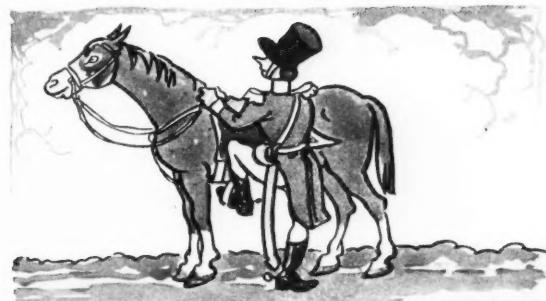
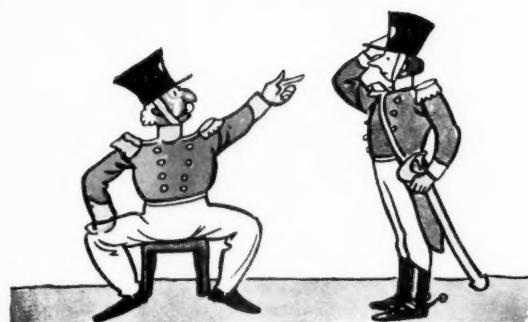
Ladies of Calibre

The publishers (HEINEMANN) of *The Spanish Steps* (8/3) state that it is "a detective story," but this is a modest description of a tale that, whether looked upon as a thriller, a study of unusual characters in a world of intrigue and affairs, or a romance in which love plays a lively part, never fails to interest and amuse. Taking Rome and its neighbourhood as the background of the energies of *Madame Beul* and *Lady Bessie Robinson*, Mr. PAUL MCGUIRE involves these remarkable women in an excellently-devised imbroglio. Wheels within wheels are frequently at work, but Mr. MCGUIRE keeps complete control of his machinery and although his readers may at times be puzzled they cannot complain that they are ever unfairly treated.

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WELCOME FOR THE WARRIOR RETURNING FROM THE WARS
AN HISTORICAL SURVEY



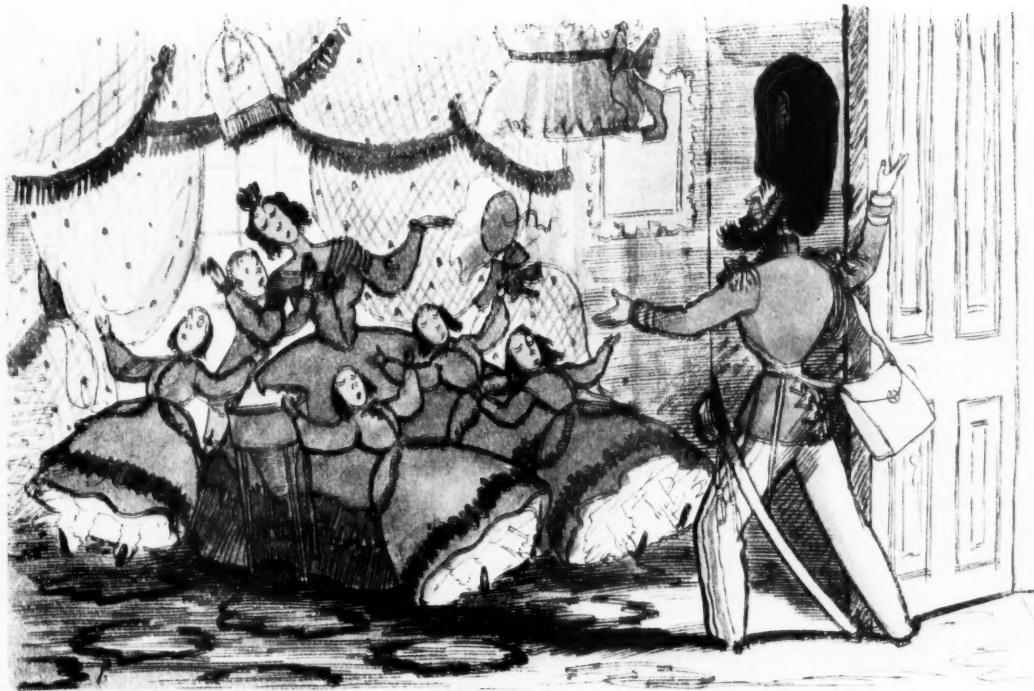
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II

PUNCH SPRING NUMBER

WELCOME FOR THE WARRIOR RETURNING FROM THE WARS
AN HISTORICAL SURVEY



III



IV



"Ark! The cuckoo!"

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